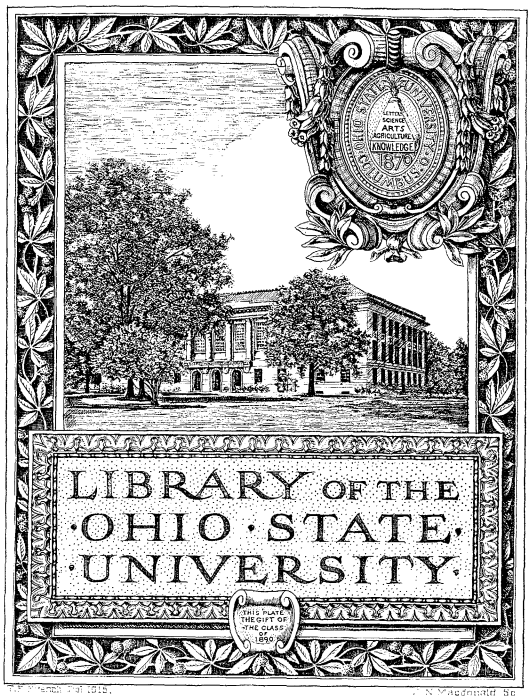

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# GUIDE

## THROUGH THE MUSIC

OF

## R. WAGNER'S

# "THE RING OF THE NIBELUNG"

(DER RING DES NIBELUNGEN)

BY

**HANS VON WOLZOGEN**

TRANSLATED BY

ERNST VON WOLZOGEN

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**THIRD EDITION**



LEIPSIC
FEODOR REINBOTH.

# THE TENOR OF WAGNER'S POEM.

Secure from covetous desire, the golden treasure in all its pure beauty once lay at the bottom of the Rhine. Around it the nimble folk of the Rhine-daughters dance and sing in playful joy — too careless guardians of the securely slumbering treasure. But sneaking out of the depths, a lustful Nibelung of the tribe of the dwarfs (residing in *Nebelheim, the home of fog)*, the spiteful *Alberich* fights his way through the flood. There, reflecting the first rays of the rising sun, the radiant gold strikes his eyes. Laughingly the jeering nymphs betray to him the accursed importance of the metal, whose possessor should win the world if the could resign love; for where gold reigns, love must fly. The Nibelung forgets the charms of the merry water-fairies for the power-promising glitter of the gold: thus he curses *love*, which to him is but *lust*, and violently snatches the treasure from the rock. Eternal night falls over the guiltless depths. — Meanwhile shines out on the summit of a mountain in the bright sunlight the newly built castle of the chief-god *Wotan*. His mind, since the delights of young love faded for him, was likewise bent on possession and power. He therefore made a treaty with the daring *giants* to build him a strong castle, in return for which they requested what all beings long for: sunny, warm love for their cold home, in the shape of the fair *Freia*, the goddess of youth and beauty. *Fasolt* and *Fafner*, the giant-brothers, now demand their re-

ward; but the deceitful companion of Wotan, the fickle fire-god *Loge,* knows how to raise greedy longings after the cursed gold in their hearts by cunningly relating Alberich's adventure. The giants now claim the gold as ransom for Freia. — Wotan and Loge step down into Alberich's misty dens, where de robber forces the dwarfs, by the power of the magic ring which he has forged out of the »Rhinegold«, to gather together a most enormous treasure for him. His brother *Mime* was obliged to procure him the *tarncap* (»Tarnhelm«), which has the power of rendering invisible or transfiguring its wearer. The gods artfully use this and by its means catch the haughty possessor: he is forced to give up the treasure, the tarncap, and even the ring. No power is left him, save the power of the curse, and this falls upon the gods together with the possession of the fatal ring. — But now the giants again demand their reward. Wotan, knowing well the magic which dwells in the ring, tries to keep it from them, and Freia already fears she must fall to their lot, when the warning apparition of *Erda,* the prophetess, the goddess of primeval wisdom, rises out of the ground and, holding over Wotan the curse which cleaves to the ring and the eternal end it is predestined once to bring upon the gods, induces him—but now too late—to give it up to the giants. All too soon he recognises the truth of her threat; for, in hastily packing up the treasure, the giants quarrel over the ring and Fafner kills Fasolt, taking all the riches along with him, which he is henceforth to guard in the shape of a dragon. (»Lintwurm«.) Deeply affected, Wotan and the gods turn their steps towards the castle, and as he crosses the rainbow-bridge a new creative thought arises in his mind, a thought born of the divine necessity of the god, not of a mere creative desire: *Walhall* shall be the name of his heavenly building. — These are the contents of the prelude: »Rhinegold«. —

In order to fill the vast halls of Walhall with valiant champions, who should help the gods, if at any time destruction should threaten them through the power of Alberich, who is always lurking about, seeking for a chance

of regaining his ring Wotan begets the *Walküren**), his knightly daughters, amongst whom were *Brünnhilde*, and *Erda* herself. But of what avail are all heroes, who merely work out his own will, unless he can find the *only one*, who, himself free from the curse, may save the gods by regaining the fatal ring? To this end a human woman bears him the twins *Siegmund* and *Sieglinde*. Of these two the girl was carried off and married by *Hunding*. The boy, growing up amongst enemies and hardships, became a hardy, valiant man. And who but Wotan himself caused all his troubles, who himself thrust the sacred sword into the tree in Hunding's house, which only Siegmund is able to draw out again? Yet even Siegmund is not the hoped-for free hero, he is likewise under the ban of the curse. Whilst flying from Hunding, he accidentally enters his house and there finds his sister as well as the sword. The Wälsungen twins, the children of Wotan, in order to save their race from destruction, bind themselves by a stronger tie than that of brother and sister. But Fricka, Wotan's wife, the protectress of marriage, cannot suffer this outrage and forces her husband to withdraw his help from the guilty hero; he, Wotan, now despairingly wishes for »*the end*« himself, and with a most terrible curse consecrates the Nibelung-hero Hagen, the son whom Alberich begot without love of the corrupt wife of the Rhine-king *Gibich*, as the annihilating heir of the world. Brünnhilde, conscious of the necessity under which the gods suffer, is to foretell to Siegmund his death. But when she sees him flying before Hunding with the poor despairing woman he loves so dearly, her noble heart is deeply touched. The fight with Hunding commences, Brünnhilde *protects* the Wälsung, but upon the sacred spear of the offended god, which he stretches between the combatants, Siegmund's sacred sword breaks into splinters, and he falls beneath Hunding's blows. — The Walküre surrenders herself to Wotan for punishment, having first helped Sieglinde to escape by giving

*) *Wal* (Val) means the totality of warriors killed in battle: *küren* means to choose. *Valküren* are the maidens who choose the heroes most fit for the last combat. (*Einherier.*) — Note of the transl.

her her own mare Grane and the pieces of Siegmund's sword. The god is forced to condemn his dearest child to slumber on a rock, till a man shall find her by the way, wake and win her. The maiden implores but one favour from her offended father: to surround her during her slumbers with a wide circle of blazing fire, in order that no man shall wake her, but a *fearless hero*, whom she hopes and expects will be: *Siegfried*. — These are the contents of the »Walküre«.

From henceforth the god Wotan roves as a *Wanderer* through the world, content inactively to watch the tardy accomplishment of his devises. In an eastern wood, where Fafner as dragon lies in his den, Siegfried, who was brought forth there by the dying Sieglinde, grows up. The Nibelung *Mime* being his sly guardian, who wants to bring him up and train him to kill Fafner and win the ring for him. But Siegfried hates the ugly dwarf; in the free woods he educates himself. Scarcely does he learn that the sacred sword, whose splinters Mime is unable to forge together rightly belongs to him, than he does the work himself and with this new sword »Nothung« he purposes to slay the dragon. Mime brews a poisoned potion with which he intends to kill the vanquisher, when he shall have done the deed. — Siegfried does indeed the valiant act, unconscious of what spoils he had gained by it. But a little of the dragon's blood touches his lips and by that he learns to understand the language of the birds. They council him to kill the treacherous Mime and to take the ring and the tarncap. Now he is the free owner of the treasure; but he, the merry son of the woods, does not care for the glittering gold. The mysterious awe of the lonely wood fills him with longing after the hitherto sorely missed love and in exulting joy he follows his bird-guide to Brünnhilde's rock. — Here once more Wotan interposes between his grandchild and victory; for the hero must win what the god wishes him to win through strife and trouble, and by his own might. His sword breaks the spear of the god, upon which it formerly was splintered. He wakes the maiden. He triumphs over the last re-

sistance—she casts away her holy fear of the husband to whom she shall belong and Love celebrates his most glorius victory. — Thus ends the second day of the festival-play: »Siegfried«.

But the end, the salvation of the accursed world, is not yet accomplished, for Alberich and his son Hagen, whom Wotan destined as heir of the world, are still living and working, the gold is still unrestored to the Rhine and the ring is still in Siegfried's possession. The drama of the »Göiterdämmerung«*) is still to follow. — The hero starts in pursuit of new deeds of valour, leaving Brünnhilde the ring as a token of remembrance. How shall she, now become a devoted loving wife, give his beloved gift back to the Rhine in order to save the world and the gods? No, she too falls under the curse in the mistaken joy and pride of her love. — Siegfried comes to the court of Gibich: there awaits him Alberich's son Hagen, the half-brother of king *Gunther*, and throws the net of his Nibelungish art around him. Their sister *Gutrune* offers him a magic potion which makes him forget all that before was dear and sacred to him and awakens earthly desires for Gutrune, this new vision of human grace and beauty. He demands her for his wife and in return offers to win Brünnhilde for Gunther. He assumes Gunther's shape by means of the tarncap, struggles with Brünnhilde and snatches the ring from her — In despairing grief at having been deceived, Brünnhilde openly accuses him of treachery. Not Gunther could have overcome her, for he has not the ring, but Siegfried, who was her husband. Thus Gunther sees himself detected and in the meanwhile must suspect Siegfried of having stained his conjugal honour. Brünnhilde, Gunther and Hagen swear his death. He is to be slain in the chase. — Shortly before his end he

*) »Götterdämmerung« in the language of ancient German mythology means the *dawn of doomsday*, on which the gods perish in the combat against the evil powers, and old earth is swallowed up by water and burnt by fire (Muspilli). The new world, in which love and light are to reign, arises out of the waves. — Note of the transl.

meets the Rhine-daughters and they finally warn him of the curse and beg him to give them back the ring. But the fearless man laughs at their threatenings and thus wilfully runs to his death, which he might yet have evaded. Hagen's spear hits him just as he, after the fatigues of the hunt, is relating the various adventures of his life to his companions and, now no longer bewitched by the potion, lovingly recalls his union with Brünnhilde. Full of grateful love to her, his spirit takes its flight, and the two ravens, who witnessed his death fly up to tell Wotan of the approaching end. — Hagen tries to draw the ring from Siegfried's hand, and as Gunther disputes it with him, he kills the king: but Brünnhilde, to whom the Rhine-daughters swam to tell her everything and who now clearly descries truth and error, guilt and expiation, draws the ring from off the finger of the dead hero whilst her people pile up the pyre, and throws it into the Rhine for eternal atonement and salvation. Then she leaps on Grane's back into the flames, the Rhine-daughters come on swimming, waves fill the space, the terrified Hagen plunges into the water and is drawn down by the deadly arms of the fairies. The gold has found its home again, the flame devours the sacred redeemed ones, and afar dawns in the purple glow of the northern ligthts the end of the old gods, of the old world. But *Love*, who had once been cursed through the winning of the symbol of destructive sensuality, Love, who to the farthest boundary of this unblessed world of hate and envy sustained the heavy tragic consequences of the curse through guilt and expiation—this same Love, as soon as the accursed symbol sinks into the guiltless primeval element of Nature, rises, expiated and sacred, *as the sun of a new world*, towards heaven.

I.

# THE RHINEGOLD.

The prelude »Rhinegold« forms the foundation of the whole tragic action, and we see there the principal powers first opposed to each other in their original typical shape, whose growing more and more complicated the following dramas contain. Also »Rhinegold« includes the fundamental forms of the *musical* action, which later on are continually to repeat themselves, though partly transformed and worked out, and which therefore it is necessary first to impress upon the mind in their first plastic, clear and simple shape, in order to obtain a right comprehension of the whole. The very first scene of the »*Rhinegold*« is already of the highest importance as regards the whole, laid, as it is, in the pure and spotless element of the water, from which, according to the teaching of mythology, proceeds all existence, and therefore it naturally follows all dismembering, all individual breaking up of primeval unity according to the law of appearance, and at the same time all demands made by one individual atom upon another and all guilt. Before any individually distinct person is presented to our sight, before the spiritual product of one simple human word is heard; the intrumental prelude gives by the absolute art of Music the most excellently corresponding expression to this elementary being, to this sacredly serene state of guiltlessness in Nature. This prelude consists of a magnificent organ-note in E flat, whose

long sustained solitary tone sympolises the state of undisturbed unity. The upper dominant B flat combines with the fundamental tone to form an equally long sustained consonance, by and by dividing itself into its two rhythmically moving tones, which ascend alternately: the Motive of the primeval element in its simplest form. Ac soon as an ascompanying figure with lively undulating movement is added to it, the wide outlines of the motive concentrate themselves, with more sonorous sounds, into a more characteristically worked-out plastic shape (**1.**), in which it now

**1.**



gains some affinity to those beings, which represent that element in half human and individual shape: the »Rhinedaughters«.

To express their merry play in the waves, the rhythm of the motive becomes still more lively, and the ornamental figure rolls up and down in lightly flowing sixteenths. To this accompaniment rings out the first song of the Rhinedaughter Woglinde with the melodious sweetness of the human voice. This melody becomes a *motive*, no longer for an element, but for the personality of the Rhinedaughters themselves. (**2.**)

**2.**



During the greater part of the scene the innocent gaiety proper to the element, musically illustrated by the prominent melody which accompanies the water-fairies' gambols, prevails so much, that the representative of sensual longing after gain, the Nibelung Alberich, cannot yet manage to get his own distinctly characteristic motive. He has at present to play the part of the ridiculed, powerless fool; and whilst this mockery expresses itself in charming melodies of song, there remains nothing for Alberich but the musical illustration of the absurdity of his situation and demeanour. Not until the third sister also has roguishly deceived him, does he burst out with a doleful cry of two notes, which, here only the compact expression of his present condition of utter defeat, subsequently assumes a wider and more important meaning as a Motive of Bondage. (**3.**)

**3.**



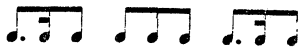
In the desperation of his weakness he makes another attempt to catch the flying girls by clumsily climbing up, and their scorn, expressed in the reiteration of their former songs drives him into a rage which produces a second, at first only generally effective Motive of Menace, an exquisite musical symbol of his furiously clenched and outstretched fist. (**4.**)

**4.**



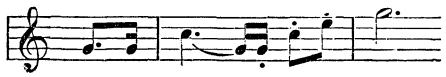
But that, which is here abruptly introduced as a momentary effect, is in truth the essence of the whole demoniacal tribe, the gloomy Nibelungen, represented by Alberich. They are the eternal threateners, the powers of darkness, working for the destruction of all that exists. The first desire, by disturbing the blessed peace of the primitive condition, has already commenced the work of

*destruction.* The rhythm of his menace is the typical rhythm of the Nibelungen, which we shall meet with later on to express this underground race at work at the forge.



Alberich's rage having reached its culminating point, his menacing motive gradually takes a softer tone, finally dissolving itself into a gently moving and afterwards glistening and quivering figure, which gives a new object to his desire, and which introduces the fatal *motor* of the tragical development of the entire drama. Like a brilliant flourish of trumpets, ever and anon through the accompaniment of this figure, is heard the Motive of the Rhinegold, the symbol of all desire. This, its symbolical meaning for the whole drama, is always expressed by this *fanfare* (**5.**), whilst the

**5.**



joyful lay with which the three fairies greet the sight of the gold revealed by the sunbeams is later on used also as a motive to denote the delightful lustre of the precious water treasure (**6.**). But the end of the song, which here

**6.**






is but the merry outcry of the reckless girls, afterwards assumes in the mouth of the demonic robber of the gold the meaning of a triumphant shout of victory (**7.**).




Noticeable is further the new accompanying figure, which expresses the playing of the waves and fairies around the cradle of the gold and lasts during the whole scene.

To these motives are added subsequently two new ones, closely related to the Rhinegold and which are to become of fundamental importance in the following drama. First appears the Motive of the Ring, when Wellgunde betrays to the questioning Alberich what world-conquering power the gold in the shape of a magic ring might assume in the hands of its owner. (**8.**)




But the possession of this symbol of sensual power depends on the renunciation of the ideal love. For this reason the formula of renunciation, which Wellgunde reveals to the Nibelung, is now introduced into the hitherto bright and joyful play with its gloomily menacing flourish of tubas and trombones. In this formula the motive of the ring is joined with the sorrowfully descending Motive of renunciation of Love's power and bliss. (**9.**) The connection of these




motives includes the whole tragedy of the ring of the Nibelung in itself: henceforth all long eagerly for power and splendour and the holy power of Love, sold and resigned for these, bears the dreadful curse of that dark demon, that transfers itself from one victim to another, until the purest love in Brünnhilde's heart, which only became sinful through an awful delusion, frees the world from it by her own renunciation of the gold, which is connected with her expiatory death.

Alberich heeds no longer the mocking of the careless girls, all his attention is given to the secrets they have just let out; he repeats those secrets to himself, aside, dwelling most meaningly on the motive of the ring, whose possession he now recklessly longs for, merely making short allusions to the motive of Renunciation, of which he thinks nothing. Once more sounds the fanfare of the Rhinegold, but this time in a mournful minor; after it the motive of the ring announces itself and then, when Alberich rushes up to the rock and with the curse snatches the gold from off it, resounds motive (**9.**). The disappearing of the demon in the depths, the frightened nymphs pursuing him in vain, the sinking of the whole undulating element into darkness, in order to prepare the way for the change of scene into the light fields of the upperworld—all this is musically expressed by that lately mentioned accompanying figure (**6.**) ever descending and to

which finally once more sounds a low and sad reminiscence of the whole formula of renunciation (**9.**). By and by this wavy movement becomes simpler and mounts upward again in single periods: the mist, into which the waves had resolved themselves, rises and gradually clearing away, allows the aspect of the *second scene* to be descried: a mountainous country. The Motive of the Ring in its simple, most plastic form is repeated several times during these periods and, by means of slight alterations and reversals recalling the beginning, represents the ideal connection between the two scenes. For even up there among the gods, with whom we are now to be, sensual longings for might and splendour have been awakened, since *Loge* brought the germ of it to maturity in Wotan's breast, by inducing him to make the treaty with the giants for the building of his castle in exchange for the goddess of Love. Thus the motive of the ring dying away *pp.* immediately conducts to the only rhythmically changed **Motive of Walhall,** which in its majestic brilliancy pic-




tures Wotan's once merely dreamt of, but now embodied ideal of sublime divine power in the castle of *Walhall!*

In this scene, in which Wotan is exulting joyfully over the finished work, whilst Fricka reminds him of his unlucky treaty and of the loss of Freia, which is thereby threatened, the motive of *Walhall* alternates with a new and also very characteristic motive, whose grandly descending movement indicates the final settlement as well as the strength of this treaty, which is inevitably to bring

on the decay of the power of the gods by fettering their freedom: This Motive of the treaty (**11.**) appears in the

**11.**



M. of Bondage.

form of an enlargement of the motive of Bondage (**3.**) with which it begins. Interpolated between the two appears a further motive in Fricka's coaxing song which as well from its musical form—a tender flow of softly upward and downward gliding tones—as from its further use, may be called a Motive of Love's fascination. (**12.**)

**12.**



Fricka in the solemn tune of the motive of renunciation complains that Wotan »for might and tyranny's idle toy will squander woman's worth and weal«. As Freia, flying before the giants, draws near the Motive of the Goddes of Light and Love is added (**13.**) and is

**13.**




then continued in an uncertain, descendig movement, illustrative of her flight. I will notice the motive of Freia at once in its completed form which, however, does not appear until later and distinguish it from the Motive of Flight (**14.**) as a new and significant symbol of the god's

**14.**



distress, which begins here and increases throughout all the dramas.

The entrance of Fasolt and Fafner, coming to remind Wotan of the treaty, is accompanied with coarse and heavy steps by this Motive of the giants (**15.**) in its

**15.**



magnificent although clumsy and energetic complete form. Of course in this scene the motive of the treaty plays the chief part, together with the motive of Freia: but to these are added two theme-like figures, of which the first one is connected with the words: »*bedungen ist, was tauglich uns dünkt*« (»The rate we mean already is marked«)*) — »*Verträgen halte Treu*« (»truthful be to bonds!«) a further with Wotan's: »*Verträge schützt meines Speeres Schaft*« etc. (I shield the words on my weapon's shaft«) and which is found subsequently in the following form (**16.**) as a Motive

**16.**



of the runic wand, (Wotans spear with the runic characters of the treaties), whilst the other one, which appears first with Fasolt's words: »*Weisst du nicht offen, ehrlich und frei Verträgen zu wahren die Treu*« (»Find I thee aught but open and fair when faith to thy bargains is bid!«) serve to characterise this special treaty with the giants (**17.**s)

**17.**



*) S. Formann's translation of »The Nibelung's ring«. (London, Schott & Co.)

by its most significantly wrought out transformation of the »motive of the treaty«.

The next *motive* we meet with is that depicting the magic golden apples (**18.**) which Freia guards and which

**18.**

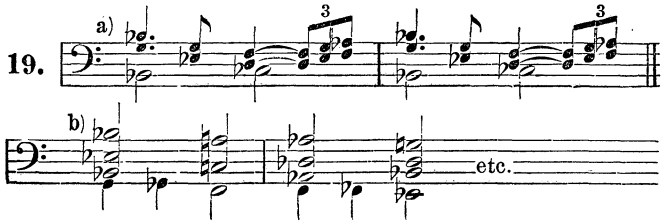


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ensure eternal youth to the gods, who eat them. It is therefore a musical expression of lovely blooming life and joy. This golden symbol in undisturbed possession of the gods has the same meaning for them in their world as for the Rhine-daughters to the water-world; this motive shows therefore considerable relationship to the latter. In close examination will be discovered in its first part the Motive of Renunciation, but here in a clear, pure and happy major.

We hear this most enchanting phrase first out of Fafner's mouth; for whilst Fasolt only longs for the person of the beautiful goddes herself, his brother's far more demoniacal mind is set upon the utter destruction of the bright world of the gods by depriving them of the magic apples of youth: darkness shall spread over them as over the Rhine through Alberich's rape; and when he confides his intention to Fasolt, the first part of the last motive is curiously altered and sounds now in mournful and dark tones no longer in D major but mysteriously earnest in E flat as a Motive of a growing twilight (**19.**) which dies away in a chromatic descent of long melancholy harmonies (**6.**)

**19.**



As a contrast to this the previous motive in its entirety rings out in the original major key, enlarged into a sort of merry war-song, as the gods Froh and Donner come to help their sister. But between them Wotan must stretch his spear and remind them of the Runic-writ on its shaft. (**16.**) From such an awful perplexity only cleverness and cunning, such as *Loge's*, can extricate. His coming is announced by the quickly to and fro frisking, up and down running chromatic movement which forms the individual Motive of Loge. (**20.**) Thus the fickle spirit of the flame

**20.**

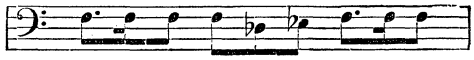



rambles through all corners of the world, as he narrates immediately afterwards, and thus flickers and flutters his ambiguous element, which now and then breaks out of the tune of his motive leaping up in chromatic gusts and exulting in wild trills. The impish magical nature of this element, as of its master, is further expressed by a motive, afterwards introduced at the enchantment of the »Waberlohe« (the wavering blaze). This motive takes an important place in the drama, and may be called the Motive of the fire's spell. (**21.**)




The typical personifications of the principal powers ruling in the drama have hitherto made an impression of almost superhuman plastic art, and now the nature of the cunning Loge, working in every direction with his scoffing cunning, draws these powers into a game of intrigue, in which everything assumes, in the dubiously fluttering light of his flame, a spiritual and interesting aspect. All through this scene the restless chromatic motive of the god, who now attains the secret mental dominion over all, is a leading feature. The climax of the scene in which Loge's activity is concentrated, is his wonderful narration. Already in the first part of it, in his ineffective seeking for a substitute for Freia, he comes to the theft of Alberich, the Rhinegold, which he mischievously suggests as a compensation, so that even the simplified undulating Wave-movement (**6.**) becomes ambiguous. This movement, charmingly united with the Motive of Freia, accompanies the first part as an expression of the happiness of all beings in the peaceful enjoyment of Love's delights; whilst the second part, and further on the greedy search of the gods, is amply illustrated by the Motive of the Ring and other themes that refer to the Rhine-daughters and

their treasure. With most mischievous joy Loge repeats frequently during his narration the Motive of Renunciation; he catches Fricka with the Motive of Fascination (**12.**), by praising to her the magic power of the Rhinegold to keep a husband's fidelity. And at the words »*den zimmernd Zwerge schmieden*« (»which dwarfs forge etc.«) sounds for the first time the before mentioned Forging-motive of the Nibelungen (**22.**), but here with changed rhythm as: 

**22.** 

After his narration the Rhinegold fanfare, surrounded by glittering chromatic harmonies, falls like a misty veil of delusion over the gods and the Motive of the Ring has a like effect upon the giants: this causes Wotan's refusal to obtain the ring for them as a substitute for Freia and the defiant exit of the giants with the goddess to the gradually ceasing tune of their gravely stamping motive. In the twilight, now rapidly setting in, the remaining gods become gray and old looking, and Loge expresses his scorn for them in the Motives of the Apples-of-youth and of Freia, as well as in the now justly domineering Motive of Twilight. Uttering the words; »*verlorner Jugend erjag' ich erlösendes Gold*« — (»For faded youth the fresh'ner is yet to be found!«) — Wotan, under the guidance of Loge, starts on his descent to Nibelheim, which journey is illustrated by Loge's Chromatic motive and Renunciation motive. Then follows a lively elaboration of the motive of Flight (**14.**); for the necessity which it expresses drives Wotan down. Upon this, at the entrance into Nibelheim, after an energetic repetition of the Rhinegold-fanfare and the Motive of the Ring, the Forging-motive, partly executed by merely rhythmical strokes on anvils, takes the predominance, accompanied by the Motive of Flight in an elaborated form, sinking deeper and deeper, till its first two notes, rising again, show themselves at last to be the Motive of Bondage  We are now together

with the gods under the magic spell of Alberich's ring, and with the thrice repeated Motive of the Ring in *ff.* the third scene is ushered in.

The first dialogue between Alberich and Mime is accompanied in often changing rhythm by the Motive of Bondage, which now, in its varying form, seems to represent the short, sharp strokes of a lash, swinging upwards and then down again; from this at length proceeds the solemn Motive of the Tarncap's Spell (**23.**), so that the

**23.**



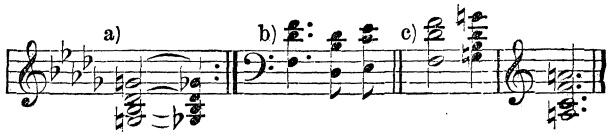
s. Nr. 3.

raising of the last expresses the invocation of the spell, and its downward stroke the effect of that invocation. With the necessary rhythmical alterations this spell of a demoniacal deceit both in its harmonic colour and its thematic form corresponds to the fire-spell of the great deceiver Loge.

The Forging motive and that of bondage prevail throughout this scene, especially in Mime's account of the sufferings of the Nibelungen. Alberich's dominion is specially characterised in two new motives, the first of which appears in its complete form as an appendix to the Motive of the Ring at Alberich's words: »*Zittre und zage, gezähmtes Heer! Rasch gehorcht des Ringes Herrn.*« (»Shake in your harness, you shameful herd: fitly fear the ruling ring!«) and shows itself to be somehow connected with the third Rhinegold-motive (**7.**), being a combination of its two parts, which meanwhile have grown into the two entirely Nibelungish motives of Bondage (a.) and of the Forge (b.). As a coda is now added the third new motive (c.), that of the treasure now rising from the depths of the earth,

which resolves itself into a triumphant and clear *f major*. The combination of these three motives, I have named Alberich's triumphant cry (**24.**).

**24.**




The second motive, in connection with the dominion of the Nibelungen, assumes a more distinct character in »Siegfried«, whilst here it is only to be guessed at, being two quickly carried away by the musical waves of the other motives. It can be traced in Alberich's words: »*Niblungen all', neigt euch nun Alberich!*« (»Nibelungs all, knell now to Alberich!«) and more clearly recognised at Mime's complaint about his brother's artful conquest of the ring, with which his narrating song commences. It consists of a repeat of two descending dark consonances in mysterious sequence of harmony, and hints partly at the studious cunning by means of which Alberich gained his dominion, partly at the cares that come over Mime through this dominion wich, after Alberich has lost it, envelops him in cunning and anxious thought; therefore, in my interpretation of the prelude to Siegfried, I have elected to call this very characteristic sequence the Motive of Thoughtfulness (**25.**).

**25.**



In the scene which follows, where Alberich is ensnared by Loge's tricks, the Chromatic motive of the latter is opposed in constantly changing form to the boastful pride of Alberich, which is expressed by the restless stamping triplets of the Forging motive accompanying the Motive of the rising treasure (**26.**), whose heavy awful tones

**26.**



throng upwards more and more prominently from the lowest bass. At his mocking words: »*die in linder Lüfte Wehen da oben ihr lebt, lacht und liebt*« (»though in listless breezes' breath above me you live, laugh and love«) he uses the Motive of Freia and afterwards at: »*auf wonnigen Höhen in seligem Weben wiegt ihr euch*« — (»on sorrowless heights in happy sway you hold yourselves«) the Motive of Walhall. And when he says: »*wie ich die Liebe abgesagt, Alles was lebt, soll ihr entsagen!*« (»As Love no more to me belongs, all that has breath, must be without her!«) the Motive of Renunciation sounds out again with most terrible power. This display of the Nibelung's entire demoniacal wrath against all that is great, good and beautiful, the dark, menacing character of his nature and his sunless home being concentrated in this scene, concludes with the last and strongest rising of treasure, at his words with most effective pertinacity all sung on B flat — »*Habt Acht vor dem nächtlichen Heer, entsteigt der Niblungen Hort aus stummer Tiefe zu Tag!*« (»Have heed of the night and her host, when Nibelungs heave up the hoard from death and dark into day.«) The Rhinegold-fanfare follows, and the motive of Walhall, which Alberich has entirely appropriated and so enlarged, that in this new form it may be called the Motive of the Nibelung's triumph (**27.**),

**27.**




to which Loge further on appends his own motive, as he in victorious irony catches the boaster with his own pride.

The motive of the Tarncap's Spell leads on to Alberich's double transformation into a snake and a toad. The different nature of these two animals is most exquisitely reproduced in the music, but only one of them becomes of value for the drama; it is the Motive of the snake (**28.**), with its heavy snake-like windings.

28. 


Accompanied by the exultant flourish of his own triumphant motive (27.) the fettered Alberich with his fatal *ring* is dragged by the gods to the upper world, the closely following Motive of the Ring melting with tragic significance into the dark tones of the motive of renunciation given out by the wind-instruments. And now, as before, we pass the dens of the Nibelungen with their anvil-strokes in the forging-rhythm, and then arrive, with the solemn and spun-out Motive of Flight, at the neighbourhood of the giants. whose motive heavily interrupts the light quivering figure of Loge's Chromatic motive. Finally the stormy gusts representing the fire element of the deceitful guide lead up into the clear sunlight, and with the Motive of Bondage the two gods lay their fettered prisoner safe upon the upper earth.

Alberich is now forged to summon his Nibelungs with the Motive of the Ring and the Triumphant cry: they come bringing up piles of treasure to ransom their master during a most striking combination of the motives of Forging, of Bondage and of the Rising treasure. At his repeated »triumphant cry« they disappear again. The Motive of the Ring prevails in the following scene; for Alberich, after having given away the gold and the tarncap still hopes to keep the *ring*. But this likewise is snatched away from him, while the Rinegold-fanfare sounds with awful threats in *ff*. He collapses utterly at the Motive of Renunciation. One power alone is left him: the very same power by which he won the ring and by which, as he cannot rule, he may destroy both world and gods, the power of his own misery, of the unrighteous gain of the ring, recoiling in retribution upon every owner, in a world the power of the *curse*. Two themes are to be distinguished

in the terrible curse of the demon: the special Motive of the curse (**29.**) and the restless syncopated movement in $^{12}/_{8}$ time, which expresses the destroying work of the Nibelungen (**30.**), which from henceforth menaces the

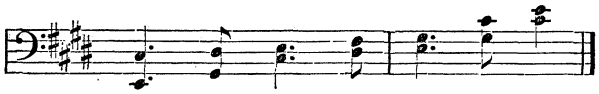



gods and secretly seeks to overthrow the world itself. To these is added finally a figure running rapidly down in triplets, which accompanies the disappearance of Alberich into the realms of mist, of which we shall have to say more in interpreting »*Siegfried*«.

Now all is light again with the gods: the giants restore Freia. But as the heavy and still menacing step of their motive accompanies the double form of the Motive of the Apples-of-youth, worked together in fugue-like alternations, it suddenly stops to be followed by the mightly motive of the Treaty with the Giants, together with the demand for Freia's ransom, the sweetly melodious song, with which Froh and Fricka greet their sister. To the last motive (**17.**) is joined that of the giants and further on the Forging-motive, which at last remains alone, combined with the motive of the Rising Treasure, when the giants actively try to hide Freia from view by piling up the treasure. Whenever the motive of Freia appears, it is followed for the giants as well as for Wotan by the Motive of Flight; for they all feel the same pain, especially Fasolt, who must give up Freia, and Wotan, who for Freia must relinquish the treasure. And when he

hesitates to return the ring, Loge's mocking tones with the motive of the Rhinegold remind him of how it was gained and also secretly of the guilt attached to it, which the gods themselves can only expiate by restoring it to the Rhine. Yet even when the giants are about to drag Freia along with them, Wotan's ruling cupidity clings to the unlucky gold with the majestically descending notes of the Motive of the Ring. A new and greater power must interpose: *Erda*, the wise mother of earth appears and with her the Motive of the Nornes, her daughters. (**31.**)

**31.**



Its form strictly corresponds to that of the primeval element (according to mythology the mother of earth is also the representative of the primeval water-world, from which every being and the earth itself originates). The element of the primeval state of guiltlessness bears within its breast, this state being once disturbed, a secret knowledge of the fate of the guilty world. The motive, which in company with the Rhine-daughters playfully glided along before in $^{6}/_{8}$ time, here reappears in company with Erda and the Nornes in solemn $^{4}/_{4}$, which is especially remarkable in the accompanying figure of the former, in which it represents the play of the waves, whilst here it means the spinning of the *rope of fate* by the Nornes. At the words: »*Ein düsterer Tag dämmert den Göttern*« — (»a day of gloom dawns for the gods«) — the Motive of the Nornes is converted into an expressive gloomy descent, which becomes the Motive of the Götterdämmerung (doomsday = the dusk of the gods) (**32.**) and immediately leads

**32.**



to the Motive of the Ring, which concludes Erda's warning: »*Dir rathe ich, meide den Ring!*« (be ruled and wince from the ring!«) whilst at the preceding words: »*höchste Gefahr*«

— (immediate danger!«) the destroying work of the Nibelungs was alluded to in dismal syncopated notes (**30.**), and the repeated »*höre*« (»hear!«) is heard in the form of the motive of bondage.

With the motives of the Treaty and of Renunciation Wotan surrenders the ring. As though all trouble were now at an end, the Motive of Flight, happily transformed, celebrates the return of the goddes to her kindred; but soon the awful Motive of the Curse (**29.**) arises over the fall of its first victim, Fasolt, whom Fafner kills to the wild movement of the Motive of the Ring, as they quarreled over the gold, and whose death first brings forth the dissonance of the *tritonus* (b—f in sharply jerking semiquavers, which is hereafter inseparably connected with Fafner. After Fricka, with the Motive of Love's Fascination (**12.**), has invited the gods to move into the new castle, the Walhall motive sets in, which is to conclude the whole scene in the shape of a majestic entrance-march, but not without interruptions; for Wotan's mind is still oppresed by the motives of the Nornes, the Ring and the Curse. Now Donner's Storm-charm clears up the sultry atmosphere, whose motive (**33.**) in

**33.**




short hammer-like notes from the wind-instruments, sounds through the wonderful harmonies of the musical storm, which is most originally and excellently described by the swelling choir of string-instruments, divided into sixteen parts, the arpeggios rising and falling and crossing each other, like the varying gusts of wind. After the storm is over the Motive of the Rainbow (**34.**) stretches its arch

**34.**




in ever widening span over the bright G flat-major whose softly gliding movement seems to cool the air as with gentle zephyrs broken up into triplets, arpeggios and harmonious trills on the wood-instruments, harps and violins. The heav-

enly bridge leads up to castle: the Walhall-march again recommences in soft persuasive tones ornamented by glittering passages on the harps. Once more the motives of the Ring and of the Nornes dim the splendour of the castle for its owner; a new creative thought dawns upon his mind from the pressure of his cares, which is hinted at by a heroic motive of trumpets, whose affinity with the Rhinegold-fanfare is undeniable. A new power is to be created, in order to protect the doomed and guilt-stained symbol of sensual might and splendour from the Nibelungs and to win it back for the gods; this power is to bring forth the heroes and the Walküren of the next drama, Wotan's children. The symbol of *this* power is to be the godly sword, denoted by the following *motive* (**35.**)

**35.** 

And now, in spite of Loge's jeering chromatic storms of flame, whose restless outbursts perpetually menace this idea of the Gods, so full of hope, also with final destruction, in spite of the last lamentations of the nymphs in the Rhinegold-motive and its accompanying undulating movement, as they claim in touching accents the tragic justice of this destruction: the gods, beaming with smiles enter the castle, to which the Walhall-march ushers them in with the gorgeous majesty of the richest musical splendour, increasing in resounding fanfares and rolling waves of harmony to a fortissimo of the whole orchestra, magnificently concluded by the Motive of the Rainbow.

II.

# THE WALKÜRE.

The »Walküre like »Rhinegold« is introduced by a mighty organ-point (in D minor); but here it does not picture blessed peace but on the contrary the roaring of a wild storm. The wind blows, the thunder rolls, lightning flashes in the rising and falling sway of the orchestra and the stroke of the weather-god's hammer in the Motive of the storm (**36.**). From out of the descending tune of the thunder-storm the Motive of the tired Siegmund (**36.**)

**36.**




Tune of the thunder-storm.



Siegmund's Motive.

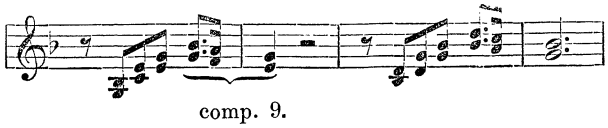
is very soon developed, which reminds us of the Motive of the Treaty (**11.**).

For Wotan hopes the desired »free hero« would be born to him from the Wälsungen-family in order to disannul the fettering treaty of the gods.

Another motive, tenderly attaching and sadly alluding to that of Renunciation, frequently joined with Siegmund's

motive, expresses the first motion of Sieglinde's love as compassion for the tired hero (**37.**). In the further

**37.**



comp. 9.

progress of her love the motive of flight returns (**14.**) which accompanies the fate of the gods and now also of their human offspring through the dark ways of their tragedy. For the Wälsungen-twins the question is likewise flight or death: out of this trouble grows their love and their love lives by this trouble. Therefore the sadly enthusiastic melody of their own Motive of Love is immediately joined to the last one (**38.**).

**38.**




of Love. (38.)

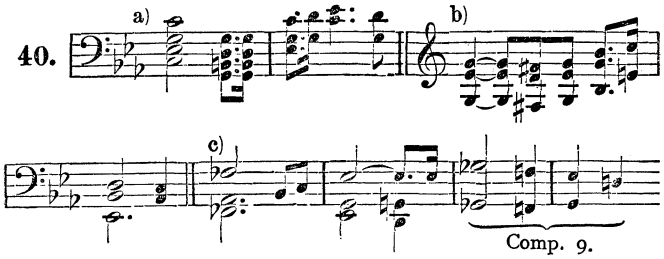
Soon after a fourth one is added to these motives, one that corresponds with Sieglinde's Motive of Compassion and which at first is joined to it. It appears whenever Siegmund in overflowing sympathy turns towards Sieglinde and ideally combines the other motives as a symbol of the Wälsungen-family *in its love and pain.* (**39.**) Another

**39.**



such general motive marks the Heroism of the family in suffering. (**40.** a.) It is formed out of the motive of the

**40.**




Sword with an inclination to that of Walhall. It appears first as conclusion to Siegmund's narration of his heroic adventures, enlarged, by a tender transformation (b.) of the first Wälsungen-motive (**39.**). In this place it is introduced and concluded by the touching phrase of recognition (c. »Now, asking woman, thou knowst etc.«), which significantly ends with the notes of renunciation. (**9.**)

Meanwhile another likewise heroic, but rather repulsive and coarse motive that of Hunding (**41.**) has been added,

**41.**




which is kept in the giant's, or rather the Nibelungs-rhythm, and which, very characteristic of the dark, questionable heroism of its owner, reminds us of Alberich's first Menacing Motive (**4.**). By using it the composer gives us to understand, that through Hunding and his family the Wälsung has lost his mother, sister and house. The rhythm of this motive further accompanies the account of the fate of the poor maid's sufferings through Hunding's kindred, and lastly the first gloomy part of Siegmund's wonderful monologue at the fire-side of his foe's house in the awful solitude of night, which, dark and monotous, dies away on the contra-C. The Motive of the Sword, with which Sieglinde warningly has left the brother goes through the beginning of this monoldgue in gloomy C minor, and afterwards, when first the hilt of the sword flashes up in the

reflex of the fire it sounds in the light of C major. The Phrase of Recognition leads, with its soothingly whispered greeting, the sister back to the lonely brother.

The now following incomparable love-scene begins with Sieglinde's account of Wotan's sword, therefore the Motives of the Sword and of Walhall prevail in it. As a new one, is added the victorious Call of the Wälsungs **(42.)**, which partly introduces the narration and then,

**42.** 

like the Wälsungen-theme **(40.** a.**)** grows out of the accompanying Sword-motive. Further on the Victorious Call receives an enthusiastic addition, and in this full exulting form it drives the unlucky pair to defying resistance against their common trouble and to the violent breach of it. In the famous magnificent song of »*Winterstürme wichen dem Wonnemond*« (»Winter-storms have waned at the wakening May«). Spring consecrates this determination, this love-feast of necessity. The Motive of Love **(38.)** is woven through the final part of the song.

With her answer: »*Du bist der Lenz*« (Thou art the Spring«) in the Motive of Flight Sieglinde renders herself up to the brother for love's delight, for trouble and death. The motive of Freia, which in the »Rhinegold« was first united with that of flight, introduces Siegmund's enthusiastic words: »*O süsseste Wonne!*« (»O wildering sweetness!«). In the following scene of their mutual recognition as brother and sister *For* the above mentioned phrase of recognition only referred to Sieglinde's belief in Siegmund as her destined saviour—this melody, alternately, or in connection with a second one: »*Wonnig weidet mein Blick*« is used as a Motive of Presentiment **(43.)**. Again sounds then the motive of Walhall in warning piano and the Heroic theme united with the Sword-motive. The last one prepares us for the mightly act of the gain of the sword. The twins,

**43.**




now knowing each other, are Wälsungs and children of Wotan; the family whom they are going to save by their matrimonial alliance in spite of their brother- and sisterhood, is a godly one; and a godly sword is given to them, against the godly treaty, as defence in the utmost trouble of their guilt.

But upon this criminal love falls Alberich's curse, who shall also break the treacherous gift of the sword that was forged against him. Whilst Siegmund with superhuman force draws the sword out of the stem in order to fight with it against fate and primeval law, he offers himself up to death and to the tragical necessity of renunciation to love. Therefore the motive of Renunciation accompanies this gain of the sword, which for Wotan's hero symbolically took the place of the fatal ring. But the tragic truth of these harmonies exists at present only for the hearers; the acting persons exult in the deed with the Motive of the Sword, with the Heroic theme and the Victorious Call, after which they draw the priest of their love, the Spring, into their victorious joy. Then increasing in wild passion raves the motive of Love, as if spurred on by the motive of the Sword, and carried away by the motive of Flight, sounding into the tune of a delightfully swinging and stormingly waving Motive of Love's stirring in the life of Nature **(44.)** that was already heard before

**44.**



comp. 38.




as accompanying figure. Love and Spring are really and wholly united but now their union is consecrated by the curse of the guilty necessity, which *fff.* with the two shrill, crashing accords of the motive of Bondage ends the act.

The motive of the Sword, dissolved into the lively $^9/_8$ rhythm, in which the figure of the Walküren-ride already announces itself, opens the second act. In the prelude the Motive of Flight is impetously worked out, then leads into the congenial Walküren-shout, and both these figures, rhythmically changed and compounded into a series of powerful accords, accompanied in the bass by Hunding's rhythm and afterwards by the real, lively, jumping figure of the Walküren-ride—all these elements form together a clear picture of Wotan trying to assist his outlaw Wälsung in his strife. When Brünnhilde has received his command in the beginning of the scene, she herself breaks into that wanton Walküren-shout (**45.** a.), with which

Ho - jo - to - ho!




everywhere as formal counterpart of the Walküren-motive (**45.** b.) the figure of the ride is combined. Amidst wild trills and merry chromatic runs—by means of which the mythological character of the warlike daughters of Wotan as weather-demons is so magnificently expressed—she hurriedly withdraws when Fricka approaches.

Fricka comes as representative of an idea, that of the sacredness of matrimony, therefore without any individual

motive, although two effective figures, characterizing her holy wrath are repeatedly heard in this scene, of which the first one has already haunted the Wälsung in his flight. After the respective return of former motives, there enters in this scene a new and for Wotan most important Motive of the godly wrath (**46.** a). Developed out of the

**46.**




Motive of renunciation. (9.)

Motive of the Tired Wälsung (**36.**) it gives utterance to the deep, painful grudge of Wotan; for through Fricka's warnings he sees clearly that the hope set upon Siegmund as the saving hero was but a self-delusion.

The Motive of Renunciation in its henceforth somewhat altered form (**46.** b) is frequently repeated during this scene, of which the principal tenor is the narration of the god's troubles to Brünnhilde.

The Motive of Flight appears here likewise at the end of the dialogue with Fricka, at the beginning of the following scene, with Brünnhild, and at the conclusion of Wotan's account of the god's troubles. Wotan's narration (which at the beginning is purposely kept void of musical life in the orchestra, as the wretched god is void of consolation) is in its details characterized by those motives that relate to the principal moments of the related actions. But when Wotan in his despair must confess his self-delusion and his inability to save himself by the help of a »free hero« from his fatal destiny, a new passionate transformation of the motive of the Nornes and the »Götterdämmerung« (**31. 32.**) as a more subjective Motive of the god's trouble (**47.**) clings to him. It is frequently joined with that of the Godly Wrath (**46.**). The second new motive of this scene,

47.




which marks the height of this last part and accompanies the wild exit of Wotan is the demoniac blessing upon the Nibelungen-scion (48.) who is destined to destroy Wal-

48.




hall trough the power of the gold. Therefore it consists in the Walhall-theme, darkened in harmony, instrumentation and rhythm, and in the Rhinegold-fanfare, sounding like a war-cry for the »Götterdämmerung«.

The Motive of Flight goes through the whole of the next scene between the two flying Wälsungs. The love-melody accompanies the soft consolations of Siegmund. After it has been repeated to Sieglinde's self-accusation, this part ends with the heroic theme and the Sword-motive, for Siegmund's last consolation is vengeance upon Hunding. The second part, introduced by Hunding's rhythm, is governed by a vehement ascending and descending move-

ment in the bass, a variation of the Motive of the God's Trouble. The descending part of this figure is further on used as a Motive of pursuit (**49.**) In this act it an-

**49.**



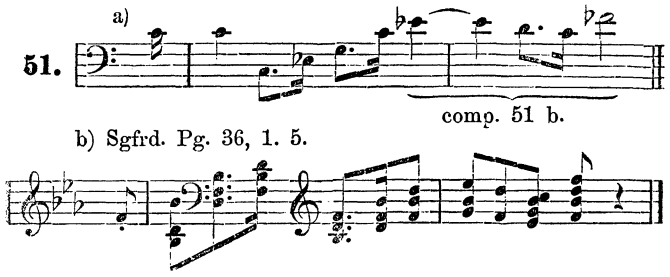
nounces the menacing approach of Hunding. The love-melody leads over to the next scene, in which the Walküre as messenger of death is likewise by her compassion to learn love's pains. Her entrance is marked by the new and hereafter very frequently repeated Motive of the question to fate (**50.** a.) which is again the funtamental form of the death-song (**50.** b.) as which Sieglinde soon after uses it. The change in the heart of the Walküre is prepared by a characteristic figure of accompaniment. More and more she is moved, after she has in vain described all the glorious delights of Walhall to the loving Wälsung with all the splendour of the Walhall-theme, charmingly attached to the motive of Freia and of the Walküren.

**50.**






The change for the drama itself is marked by the Sword-motive, when Siegmund perceives the delusive character of the godly gift and finds it fit only to end the lives of the deluded ones. This tragical meaning of the motive speaks clearly out of its repetition in minor, with which Siegmund lifts up the sword against two lives, that of Sieglinde and of the unborn Siegfried. Then the Sword-motive ends with a heroic figure which returns in the next act as motive of Siegfried, who once shall be the victorious guardian of the god's sword. This connection will appear in »Siegfried« as a special Motive of the sword's guardian (**51.** b). Hereafter the death-song assumes a second al-




tered form, more violently moved in is rhythm and most singularly characterized by staccatos and syncopes. (**50.** d) Therewith the overpowered Walküre promises Siegmund her help and then hastily leaves him. Once again the love-melody introduces the next scene. Sieglinde slumbers in Siegmund's arms. Brünnhilde's later Motive of Slumber here first announces itself. Sieglinde's dreams are hinted

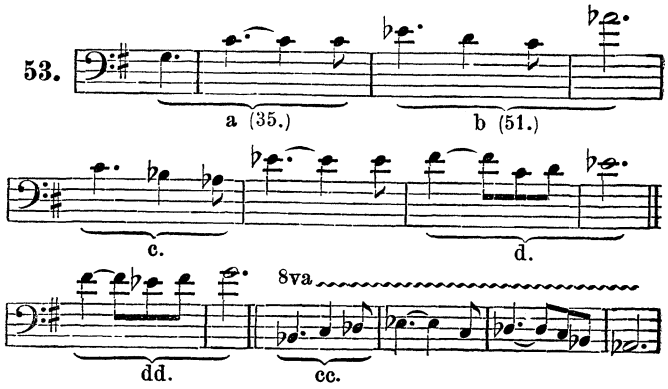
at by a reminiscence of the song of Spring, and the parting kiss of Siegmund is accompanied expressively by the motive of Freia united with that of flight. Then the horn-challenge in Hunding's rhythm breaks the sweet peace; wild fight and storm music rages in mighty crescendo until the end. The motive of Persecution in different forms, Hunding's rhythm, the motives of Flight and of the Sword are mixed up together. The last one during the fight between Siegmund and Hunding in *two* and when Sieglinde throws herself between them in *three* voices; at last it dies away in C minor, when Brünnhilde hastens to help under the trilling rush of her motive and Wotan, opposing her, under the heavy tuba-tones of the Motive of Treaty, suffers his hero-son's sword to break upon his spear. With repeated accords of the motive of bondage, as a triumph of the Nibeliungish power (comp. 24), Siegmund breaks down wounded to death. His heroic-theme and that of fate celebrate the death of the hero in mournful accords. Then the Motive of the Treaty accompanies also the death of Hunding, whom Wotan sends to Fricka as evidence of the keeping of his word. The Motive of Wrath shows Wotan's anger, and under wild chromatic volleys the god follows after his disobedient daughter with the united motives of the Godly trouble, and of Persecution. In the last bars then resounds the dreadful blessing of the Nibelung (**48.**), as the demoniac seal upon the tragical result of the act.

The Walkürs assemble on the Walküren-stone—a scene which in wonderful simple greatness is worked out to an incomparable musical picture. The proud Walküren-theme, mixed with a second motive of the ride (**52.**)

**52.** 

of a more naturalistic than heroic character, leaps as thematic basis through all that trilling and dashing, which sounds like spirited horses neighing and merry girls laughing. As soon as Brünnhilde and Sieglinde enter, the

Motive of the Godly Trouble and the descending form of the Motive of Persecution assume the dominion over the restless course of the scene, alternating at first with the last passionate enlargement of the death-song (**50.** b) and the Motive of Flight, forming the second part of it. Further on that of the ring and of the dragon (**28.**) announce themselves in order to point out to Sieglinde her asylum in Fafner's wood. Afterwards the rushing of the storm and the menacing persecution recoil in order to make room for the annunciation of Siegfried by the Motive of Siegfried the Wälsung (**53.**), which sounds in a bril-




liant flourish of horns turning valiantly from minor to major. The second motive, united with the concluding figure of the first part of Siegfried's motive (**53.** b.) to the motive of *the sword's guardian* (**51.**), is soon repeated in Sieglinde's answer. Thus the Sword-motive is also hidden in the start of the first part of Siegfried's motive (**53.** a). Parallel to the conclusion (b.) is that of the second part (d.), but in two different ways. For when the last tone is lower then the first (d.), this phrase is later on used as *phrase of ban,* by which Wotan promises Brünnhilde for punishment to the »imperious man«, who afterwards shows himself to be Siegfried, the deliverer from the ban. And where the final tone is above the first one (dd.) this phrase reminds one of the lucky deliverance from the ban

through the victory of love; as it does, for instance, in this place, at the name-giving, and still more afterwards in ascending sequences as theme of the eight Walküren imploring Wotan to spare Brünnhilde. For the same reason this figure also forms the foundation for a most important motive of salvation through love (**90.**) which here accompanies Sieglind's thanksgiving at the words: »*o hehrstes Wunder, herrlichste Maid*« (»O mastering wonder, lordliest maid!«), and at the end of the »Götterdämmerung« returns in order to give us the moral of the whole tragedy: »*Selig in Lust und Leid lässt uns die Liebe nur sein*« (»happy in luck or need holds you nothing but love!«).

In order to finish the number of Siegfried's motives on this occasion I would advert to the transformation of the first bars in the second part of the Siegfried-motive (cc.), which figure briskly turning upwards instead of downwards, introduced by a rhytmical variation of the Motive of the Ride (**52.**) and concluded merrily by the cadence (dd.), forms as a lively horn-flourish the cheerful call of the son of the wood's (**54.** a.) in »Siegfried« and afterwards




in the »Götterdämmerung« with pompous brilliant accords and in majestic rhythm the heroic theme of Siegfried (**54.** b.).

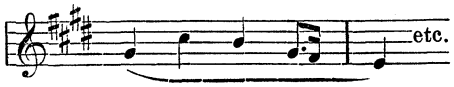
In the next scene the Motive of Wrath, domineering together with the motive Treaty, likewise is amplified by a soaring coda, which the also is attached to the motive of treaty. Out of this coda, gravely marked by the entry of the wind-instruments, speaks Wotan's wrath as direful condemnation (**55.** a.); and out of the same figure de-




velops itself in the following scene Brünnhilde's splendid melody of her *submissive justification* (**55.** b.). Siegmund's death-song, which had been so fatal for Brünnhilde, now forms the melody for *Wotan's verdict* (»No more from Walhall I send thee!«), but in connection with the Motive of Renunciation which again leads into that of Treaty. The same tune sounds softly from out the dying-away Walküren-theme, which accompanies the flight of the eight sisters and thus leads into the condemnation, which forms the principal part of the last great scene between the punishing god and his daughter imploring his righteous pity. Her song of justification, before assuming the above mentioned wonderful tune (**55.** b.) clings to Siegmund's melody with its first amplification (**50.** c.). In her account of how she came to disobey the father's commands are heard the corresponding motives of the Ban, the Ring and of Renunciation.

But Wotan must also renounce to »end his eternal grief in the wreck of his world itself.« The motive of Flight in its gloomy menacing form attaches itself to that of Renunciation. In vain Brünnhilde implores him to save her Walküren-nature, by reminding him, with the motive of the Nornes, of her own godly mother Erda; in vain she asks for the best hero as husband with the heroic theme, the motives of Siegfried and of the sword's guardian. With a short and decided figure, which keeps the middle between the question to fate and the condemnation, Wotan refuses: he can only punish and leave the rest to fate. Between the heavy, gloomy accords of the Motive of Twilight (**19.** b.) winds a gently swinging figure, clearly sound-

ing from out the tarncap-spell, like a magic lullaby. Immediately afterwards, when Brünnhilde despairingly begs to be sheltered by flames, begins, at first in minor, the plaint of the slumber-motive. (**56.**)

**56.** 


At the end of the second part: »*auf dein Gebot entbrenne ein Feuer*«, »O with thy word a fire awaken!«) the motive of the Fire Spell (**21.**) sounds out of the flutes and hautboys, with the chromatic glittering of the violins, and the heroic theme of the Walküren pierces through all with clear trumpet braying, which at last after a mighty crescendo turns *fff.* into the slumber motive (in D major).

The heroic courage of the beloved daughter breaks the punishing father's wrath, and from out of his deepest feelings of forgiving compassion he sings to her in incomparably touching melodies his parting song. In the accompaniment of the first part the tunes of the slumber-motive Walküren-shout and death-song are wound in and out with one another: then Loge again rushes in with the flames of the fluttering blaze, until he finds his boundary in the *motive of Siegfried*, who is destined to walk unhurt through the fiery wall. The last embrace is accompanied by the melody of Brünnhilde's justification growing into a powerful symphony, and this again turns into the slumber-motive, which now accelerated, softly whispering, overwaves the second part. The wonderful melody of Wotan's last words: »*Zum letzten Mal letz' es mich heut mit des Lebewohles letztem Kuss*« (For latest healing here I must bear a last farewell of lingering lips.«) (**57.**) forms also the postludium, after he has pressed the last parting kiss upon Brünnhilde's forehead to the solemn tones of the Motive of Renunciation, and after the motive of Twilight has spread mysterious chromatic harmonies over the sleeping Walküre and the gently moving Slumber-motive has died away. Then with *the question to fate* (**50.**) the god turns away, and the motive of the treaty calls Loge to the rock.

With a wild run through three octaves the first fire-sheaf breaks out of the dismal chromatic and from out a long exulting trill now flows that sprinkling, sparkling, leaping, fluttering and flickering phantom dance of the wavering-blaze (Waberlohe) with its theme of the Firespell, over which, melting into ever richer and mightier accords, the gentle figure of the Slumber-motive is soon drawn like a rainbow of peace, whilst to Wotan's last command: »Who fears the spike of my spear to face, he will pierce not the planted fire«, Siegfried's motive majestically rises from the dephts. Once again the parting song (**57.**)

**57.**




heaves a sigh, and then the flames dash over the whole scene and flare away *pp.* from sight and hearing.

III.

# SIEGFRIED.

The prelude to Siegfried gives us again dark Nibelungish tunes. Mime in his lonely forge in the forest sits meditating about the gain of the ring through Siegfried and about the sword, which he is unable to forge for him. Therefore at first only the *motive of meditation* (**25.**) sounds into the long dull roll of the kettle-drum upon the contra-F. Then the object of his meditation announces itself in the depth, by the motive of *the rising treasure* (**26.**) and thereafter the *forging motive* (**22.**) which henceforth sticks fast to Mime's person, sets in a more and more persevering movement. For only by means of his smith's craft Mime may gain the sword which is to help him to the object of his meditation. Whilst again the treasure moves from below the scourge-strokes of the *motive of bondage* drive him to his work. But this same scourge is to lead to his dominion, therefore the motive of bondage turns at the culmination of the prelude into the *triumphant call* of Alberich (**24.**), sounding in victorious *ff*. The frequently repeated motive of the *ring* draws a lively glittering and splendid picture of the hoped-for trophy. Meanwhile the *motive of the dragon* (**28.**), who watches the treasure, begins already to wind itself on in the bass; and the motive of the *sword*, upon which Mime's meditations and exertions are all thwarted, rises in clear C major above the menacing warbling of the last tone. The Forging Motive and that of Bondage lead into Mime's song, in which

his outbreaking wrath, his musing and his dread are marked by the different motives of the prelude, with the one exception of the triumphant call, which here is replaced by the ambiguous motive of triumph, concluded by Loge's mockery.

Now young Siegfried with his merry call of the son of the woods (**54.** a.) enters lightly and laughingly into the gloomy Nibelungen-sphere. With youthful impatience he demands his sword and examines it with the first part of the *Siegfrid-motive* (**53.** a. b.). His anger at the incapable smith breaks forth stormingly with a new musical phrase, which throughout the whole scene marks his characteristic contrariety to the tenacious and slow nature of Mime, who is mostly accompanied by a queerly rocking, wobbling, tottering enlargement of the forging-motive. This new motive of Siegfried's is indeed nothing else than that love-stirring in nature (**44.**), which in the »Walküre« inflamed the passion of his parents, and which now characterizes his own disposition so closely related to Nature, and which everywhere shows itself in exulting love of life; and especially as anger and disgust opposed to Mime's weakness and falsehood. This Motive of love of life (**58.** a) further plays as lovely whispering figure of accompaniment round the sweet *love-melody* (**58.** b), which the

**58.**



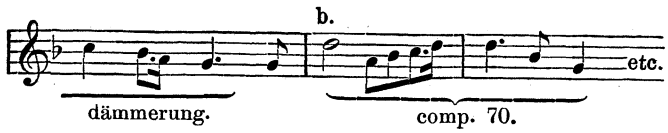
youth has learned from the voices of Nature. This charmingly entangled picture clears up into a series of light major-accords, when Siegfried in the limpid mirror of the rivulet sees his own picture, which is musically painted by the combined motives of Siegfried and of the Wälsungs. (**40.**)

The view of his image in the water has lead his mind to the inquiry after his descent. Mime's very touching relation of Siegfried's birth and his mother Sieglinde's death, tenderly accompanied by the Wälsungen-motives of the first act of the Walküre (**39. 37. 38. 14.**) produces again the motive of Siegfried, which rises sadly from out the Wälsungen-motive (**39.**) that dies away moaningly. (»She died—but Siegfried—he was saved!«)

Mime praises his own merits for the education of the foundling, but Siegfried always interrupts him with this passionatly animated Wälsungen-motive (**39.**), which henceforth clings to the recollection of the mother whose death he caused; first he wants to know why he was called »Siegfried« — question and answer in the Siegfried motive —then he demands the fragments of his father's sword, which Mime brings on with the motives of meditation and of the sword, and Siegfried receives with the merry accords of the motive of the sword's guardian. In impetuous briskness and soon cheerfully mixed with the sword-motive the motive of love of live accompanies his demand upon Mime: to weld a new sword out of the fragments. Then with the gay tune of his lovely *wandering-song*, the middle part of which is again formed by the motive **58,** he hastens away from Mime's den. A little phrase out of the melody of this song (»forward I fly«) returns in the »Götterdämmerung« in order to characterize Siegfried as the wanderer *through the world of hero's adventures.*

**59.**






For Mime, left alone with his idle meditations, the wanderer's song changes the into Ring-motive, and his anxious meditation ends in sharp *ff.* with the melody of renunciation; »*des Nibelungen Neid, Noth und Schweiss nietet mir Nothung nicht.*« (»The Niblung's heat, greed and need, serve me not Nothung to head«).

At his last words appears already seriously and majestically Wotan's Wanderer-Motive (**60.** a.) in full




chords; followed by his noble and simple *wandering melody* (**60.** b.) This is the musical countenance, which Wotan keeps up throughout the whole second scene in contrast with Mime, whose uneasiness expresses itself in a quivering, abrupt figure. The nature of this contest between the god and the Nibelung required a most symmetrical structure of the scene. It begins with the mighty, imposing Motive of Treaty, with which Wotan quietly seats himself near the forge of the frightened smith. and which Mime with affected threatening returns in the face of the unwelcome guest, when he says: »*Dein Haupt pfänd' ich für den Held!*« (»Thy head hold I for my hearth«). The three questions which he now puts to Wotan are always accompanied with the motives of his special art and wisdom:

that of forging and of meditation. Wotan's answers are concluded by the Motive of Treaty.

In between, the three answers describe *Nibelheim* (Dwarf's home) by the motives of Forging, of the Ring, of the Treasure, the triumphant call and the proud Nibelung's triumph; *Riesenheim* (Giant's home) by the motive **15.** the rhythm of the giants, the motives of the Ring and of the Dragon, alluding to Fafner; *Walhall*, with the wonderful Walhall-march, the theme of the Nornes and the curiously ambiguous Motive of godly power (**61.**). This motive

**61.**




corresponds in form with that of the godly trouble. It consists in firmly and heavily rising scales, which prove to be the foundation of the motives of the Nornes and of the Treaty. Wotan is the ruler by treaty, whose slave he is: thus the godly power became his personal trouble: it is his fate to perish by the tragedy of his own power.

As after his answer, Mime is now likewise to solve the questions, there is added to his motive forging a new and most comically meandering and ducking figure, which we may briefly call the crawling Motive (**62.**) and

**62.**




with which he slips through the dangers of the questions. As Wotan's question after the Wälsungen is accompanied by the heroic theme, concluded by the farewell to Brünnhilde (**57.**), thus likewise Mime's gay answer, concluded by Siegfried's Motive. The same one combined with the Sword-Motive helps to answer the second question after the sword and gives, in the third question after the new forger of the sword, in its own tones the answer, which Mime does not yet understand. His foster-son's motive of love of life

drives the poor unknowing one to desperation in the Motive of Renunciation. The Motive of Treaty again concludes the bet that is won by Wotan, and with the two motives of Siegfried, with that of the sword's guardian (**51.**), and of the Wälsung (**53.**), Wotan, after having denoted the »*fearless hero*« as the forger of the new sword and as the redeemer of Mime's head, now fallen due to him, leaves the trembling, down hearted Nibelung to the torments of *Loge,* who as a true fire-spirit knows how to excite a burning fever of cowardly anxiety in Mime's veins. This paroxysm of Mime is musically described by a most grotesque, fret-worked, chromatic variation of the *fire-spell.* The dull, grumbling motive of the dragon forms the fundamental bass to all this checkered play.

All this foolish spook vanishes as Siegfried comes home to the den with his merry wanderer's song. Now Mime would like to teach the dauntless boy, by his chromatic tune of the fiery spell, to dread. But for Siegfried the chromatic distortion, by which Mime wants to explain the meaning of the word »dread« to him, turns into the clear and charmingly waving Slumber Motive of Brünnhilde. (**56.**) For only from the slumbering maid is he to learn dread, not from the dragon, over whose body his path leads him to *her!* The sword he needs for this adventure he forges himself: with the Motive of the sword's guardian he begins the ingenious work, the musical illustration of which fills the rest of the act in exquisite gradation. The pre-eminent parts of this great scene are the two airs of Siegfried in swelting and in hammering the steel. In the prelude to it, the filing of the fragments, the leaping rush of the motive (**52.**) jumps to and fro in wild vivacity. The same, alternating with the scale of the treaty, gives the musical fundament to the energetic and gay *smelting-air* in which after mime has told the name of the sword, the phrase' of Nothung (**63.**) returns several times. Between

**63.**



the first and the second air Mime waves the harmonic veil of the Motive of Twilight (**19.** b.) over his secret plan to get rid of the dragon-killer by poison. Thereafter appears a new motive, consisting of two parts, of which the first one in clear and firm shape (a) signifies the success of Siegfried's work (the cooling of the steel) and in darkened and contracted shape the succes of Mime's work (the brewing

**64.**



of the poisonous potion); whilst the second part (c) gaily skipping upward, signifies the mocking Nibelung's hopeful expectations. (**64.**) But just as it drives Mime's expectations of the near triumph into the utmost exaltation, Siegfried's cry of: »Nothung, Nothung!« mightily resounds and above all the vain triumphing of the malicious dwarf swells in exulting chords, the Motive of the *sword guardian* in tempestously rising repetitions until the end of the act.

The prelude of the *second act* leads us again into the deep, gloomy darkness of the forest, where the dragon is sleeping in his den. The new individual Motive of Fafner (**65.**) which we hear in the prelude consists in the

**65.** 

giant's rhythm, succeeded instead of the dominant (com. **15.**) by the demoniacal Tritonus (g flat-c), as in the »Rhinegold« at Fasolt's death.

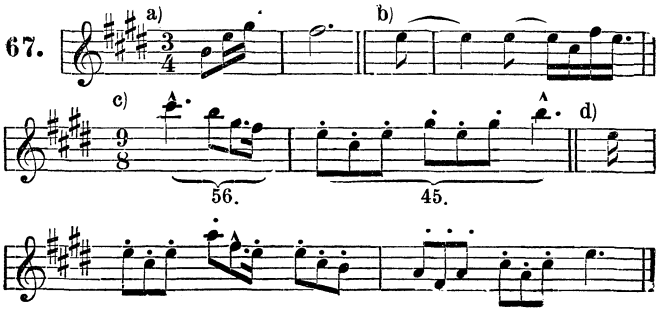
With the tune of his *curse* (**4.**) Alberich sneaks about in order to await the fate of the ring, whose motive throws a magic light upon the music. The Motive of the Ride sounds into his watch-song, accompanied by the restless syncopes of the destroying labour of the Nibelungs (**30.**), and together with it the Motives of the Godly Trouble and of Persecution come rushing on to announce Wotan's approach. The intention of the wandering god becomes evident from the reminiscences of his farewell song to Brünnhilde (**57.**), which accompany his coming and his going. The dialogue between the god and Alberich is again characterized by the contrast between the sublime composure of Wotan and the wild passion of the Nibelung, which is almost bursting with impish rage against the godly power. Therefore the god is accompanied by his solemn wanderer's pace (**60.**) and introduced by the Walhall-theme. With the Motive of Treaty he peremptorily opposes Alberich, who, after having given vent to his anger with the same raving figure with which in »Rhinegold« he withdrew, bereaved of the ring, to Nibelheim, uses with devil-

ish irony the motive of his adversary und flings scornfully his own godly wrath, the vain splendour of Walhall, both the Motives of Treaty and at last the symbol of his last hope, the sword, right into Wotan's face. Here the Motive of Treaty twice assumes a significantly transformed mode, of which the first one resembles the Motive of Condemnation (**55.** a.) and in »Götterdämmerung« becomes the Motive of Brünnhilde's vindictive fancy (**66.**) for she finds her severest condemnation in this fatal fancy.




The second transformation resembles the Motive of Persecution (**49.**); and this same obstinately repeated scale, stepping downward with pernicious violence signifies further on the last work of the »Götterdämmerung«, the end of the world itself. Upon this chief effect of his scorn Alberich sets the shrill laugther of Loge's motive, which in its old union with his triumphant motive (**27.**), he throws at his second still more effective speech like a flag of victory over the broken-off Motive of Walhall. But Wotan calmly reminds him of the victorious quality of the approaching young hero, by adding a proud chivalrous cadence to his brisk Motive of the Joys of Travel (**59.**). Then the Nibelung disappears with a new repetition of the curse. The Motive of Fafner remains alone; the darkness creeps away with windings like a giant-worm: then it breaks when Siegfried and Mime enter.

Mime describes the dragon with all sorts of chromatic horrors and with a distortion of the Slumber-Motive, which last becomes immediatly clear again when Siegfried laughingly answers with his heroic Wälsungen-theme. In parting Mime tries the odd harmonies of his Cooking-Motive, (**64.** b.), hoping that his poison might tame the mind of the defiant youth: but he ends with the dubiously rickety Forging-Motive (in $^4/_4$ time), which after his exit glides into a softly waving figure long spun out, clear and lovely diving from out of the gloomy darkness. We may call it the figure of the *forest's weaving* (*Waldweben*). It continues with few interruptions troughout the whole act, swelling into a lovely undulating flood of music, of more and more interwoven instrumental voices, from out of which the solitary Siegfried by and by comes to understand more and more the secret voices of nature. The fading picture of the ugly Mime is succeeded in his mind by that of the beloved mother, in the touching tune of the woe-worn Wälsungen kin (**39.**) And the idea of *her* awakens in his heart the longing after the *Love*, which everywhere Nature preaches unto him. Thus the sweet love-melody of Nature's life (**58.** b.) draws him into the charming billow-play which in »Rhinegold« accompanied the seductive song of »woman's wonder and worth«. Now he is still more attentive to Nature and soon distinguishes the four lovely little tunes of the bird, who afterwards in the same tunes give him exellent advice. (**67.**) He fails piteously in his



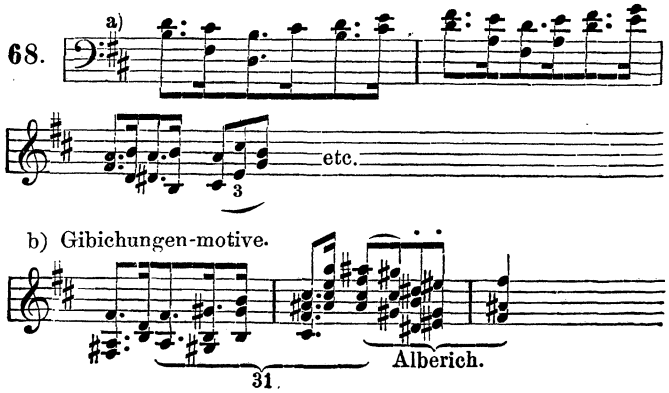
endeavours at imitation; he gives the bird a jolly tune upon his horn, combining *the call of the son of the woods*, with the *Siegfried-Motive* and forcibly concluding it with that of the *sword's guardian*. But in the depth the Motive of the Dragon is already grumbling. After a short dialogue, in which the Motive of Fafner dominates, Siegfried runs up to Fafner with the flourish of the Sword's Guardian, which also ends the furious combat, during which the Motive of the Dragon, entwined in restlessly hammering triplets, winds itself in the depth, whilst that of the son of the forest carelessly leaps above and over it. With that same flourish Siegfried, after the last speech of the dying Fafner, in which the Motives of the Curse, of Siegfried and of the Destroying Labour are significantly combined, draws the sword out of the dead body.

Now in the renewel of the »Waldweben« the voice of the bird assumes for the listening dragon-killer the clear significance of real words, pointing out to him the ring and the tarncap (**67.** o.+d.).

A short bi-tonous figure frisking about in syncopic-rhythm, sometimes appearing as the Motive ef Bondage in the Nibelheim-scene, gives to the following wrangling scene between Alberich and Mime its character of most restless vivacity. The wild excitement with which the brothers in quarreling dart their Motives of the Tarncap, of Meditation, of Forging against each other, at last whirls up an impatient variation of the Motive of Menace (**4.**) in leaping triplets, which Mime exaggerates into a figure of convulsive fury. Siegfried, returning from the den with the ring and tarncap shares the wranglers with the Motive of the Ring, and in soft *pp.* the charming melody of the *Rhine-daughters* (**6.**) and the *Rhinegold-flourish* greet the return of the gold from the giant's possession into daylight.

The »Waldweben« begins again and the voice of the bird (**67.** c.+d.) warns him of the treacherous Mime; and here again the idea of the last, by reason of contrast, awakens that of the beloved *mother*, whose Wälsungen-Motive (**39.**) gracefully enlarged by a former longing tune of the love-seeking son, fills the dying-away flood of

music with sweet melancholy. Mime approaches with a figure that exquisitely expresses his reverential bow, and which in the following scene is frequently repeated. The bird at once whistles his warning. (**67.** c.) This warning returns twice after Mime's blabbing out his desire for Siegfried's booty, with a new Motive of Booty (**68.** a.) which is somewhat like that of the »victorious joy«




(**64.** bb.+e.) and which we meet in »Götterdämmerung« in connection with the Gibichungen family, as representative of worldly power obtained in chivalrous fight.

The bird warns again and again, when Mime with his old praise of his education, with the dusky harmonies of the Cooking-Motive and with the coaxing crawling-motive, or even with the charming tune of Nature's life (**58.** b.), tries to obtrude his poisonous brewage upon the dragon-killer. The fanfare of the sword's guardian and Alberich's derisive laughter in the forging-rhythm, accompany his death and the *curse* triumphs over his new victim, whilst Siegfried rolls the dead bodies into the dungeon, with the combined Motives of the Son of the woods, of Forging and of Fafner. From out of the calmness of the »Waldweben«, into which those sounds of nature charmingly return, the new whistling of the bird, which call him to the »*Brünnhildenstein*« (the rock of Brünnhilde) drives him into the

utmost exaltation of his love-longing. A Motive of Love's Delight (**69.** a.) fills the rest of the act, until Siegfried




triumphantly hastens away, with most affecting vivacity. In the mean time the fiery blaze (**21.**) has also flared up; the end is a lively and graceful musical illustration of the bird's fluttering, when he flies before Siegfried to become his leader to Brünnhilde. (**67.** d.)

Amidst the wild storm of the Motives of the Ride and of the Godly Trouble, which, with the thundering scales of the treaty and accompanied by the wanderer's heavy paces as out of the clouds, leads over into he Motives of the Nornes and of the »Götterdämmerung«, Wotan arrives at the rock of the Walküre.

There he calls forth with a mighty awaking song Erda from the depths to tell him for the last time the future.

Here and later on the Nornes Motive accompanies him; Erda rises—and afterwards disappears also—under the softly whizzing magic harmonies of the Motive of Twillight. A most pregnant figure, which introduces the awaking song with the words: »Wala, awake!« shows a rhythmical variation of the motive of Flight, and continues throughout the whole scene as symbol of the trouble that drives to the last resolution. The Motive of the *Question of Fate* is likewise heard several times. The Motives of the Ring and of Renunciation significantly appear, when Erda confesses the failing of her knowledge; the Walhall-theme accompanies her reference to the Walküre, her child. Wotan

gives her a relation of the fate of the Walküre with the melody of her justification, combined with the Walküren Motive. He concedes the dominion of the world, in expectation of the saving deed of restoration of the ring- to the young couple Siegfried and Brünnhilde. This concession is symbolically expressed by the union of the *Walhall-theme* with the *Motive of the Sword's Guardian,* whilst a proudly rising heroic Motive of the World's Heritage (**70.**) assures the god of the expected effect of his will.

**70.**



This grand motive, prefigured in the conclusion of the Motive of Wanderer's Delight (**59.** b.), governs in three repetitions the brillant end of the sublime and solemn first scene.

Briskly and gaily begins the following scene, the sole fated one between Wotan and Siegfried, whom the bird merrily warbling (**67.**) leads on. The different parts of his simple relation of his former life with the respective motives (**65., 64.** b., **51., 52., 22.**) are always applauded by the highly pleased god with a characteristic Motive of his Joy (**71.**) which every time is enlarged or va-

**71.**




riously arranged, and which shows the ambiguous rhythm of the god's trouble and power.

But to what end all precaution? As Siegfried with scorn and menace refutes the Walhall-theme which is held up against his impatience, there, in the second half of the scene, Wotan's Motive of Wrath rises more and more and between its most urgent repititions cites—in vain—

the horrors of the fiery blaze. Siegfried's daring answer is accompanied by his own proud motive (**53.** a. b.) and when he comes to know in Wotan the murderer of his father, he assaults him with the mightily rising bass-tones of the Wälsungen-Motive (**39.**) and with the flourish of the sword's guardian, he smashes his spear into pieces with the *Motive of Treaty* rushing down and interrupted by pauses, whereafter the god disappears under the dusky veils of the harmonies of the »Götterdämmerung« (**32.**). Now the young hero throws himself exultingly into the higher and higher flashing blaze, through the rich chords of which at first sounds the merry horn fanfare of the son of the forest, whilst broad and brilliantly the harmonies of the Rhinegold are spread above. Then all is swallowed up in the wild crackling of the blaze, until Siegfried has approached the »Brünnhildenstein«, after which *the Slumber-Motive* again comes on soothingly and alluringly to receive him.

His arrival is denoted by the Siegfried Motive, and under the soft Rhinegold-accords the uneasy vivid sounds slowly withdraw before the song. »*Selige Oede auf wonniger Höh*« (»Wildness happy on high in the sun!«). The last rosy clouds rise and vanish in light melodious tunes, resembling the Freia-Motive, in which also the Slumber-Motive softly sinking down mixes itself. The possessor of the ring stands aghast amidst the mysterious banlieu of sleeping Love, and strangely touching his first timid utterance sounds in the solemn tune of *the question to fate.* (**50.**)

The third scene can be divided into three parts, of which the first reaches to the waking of the Walküre. First of all *the Motive of Love's Spell* (**12**) assumes its old right, in order to express the spell that takes in the youth's soul. It glides into the Motive of Love's Delight, when he, with the Sword-Motive mildly leading into that of Renunciation, has cautiously cut off the coat of mail from her body and sees, that »this was not male!« As a vivid expression of the confusion of his mind he uses a combination of Sieglinde's Wälsungen-Motive with that of Love's Delight, now timidly falling into soft piano and now

expanding to forte in the greatest excitement (**69.** b.). »O mother. thy manful son: a woman sleeps by the way« — the Slumber-Motive caresses away all wild excitement — »she flusters his soul with fear!« — the Fréia-Motive gently insinuates the nature of that »frightful something« which the unknowing pupil of Love in fact now only has learnt. The same motive further leads with mightily rising sounds to the grand alarum-cry »*erwache, heiliges Weib!*« »Awake, holy woman, awake!« (**50.** a.) Then in *ff.* introduces the quickly dying-away Motive of Renunciation, when Siegfried bends over her with the awaking kiss, at last soars up *ppp.* from tho dark of the bass in a long, clear, extensive flight into the highest heights, where now it ends mightly exalted with the brilliant chords of the waking *Brünnhilde's* greeting of the world (**72.** a.)




Therewith begins the second part; Brünnhilde's blissful happines. The grand accords first melt into soft harpsounds, but then they continue in a brilliant ascent, which is followed by a graceful figure, whose model we heard at the cutting off of the cuirass. (**72.** c.) This same proudly exulting conclusion attaches itself once more to the to and fro movement of the Siegfried-Motive at the words: »*wer ist der Held, der mich erweckt?*« — »*Siegfried bin ich, der dich erweckt!*« (»who is the hero, who wakened me?« — »Siegfried it was, who woke thee!«) — Then both

burst into a rapturous duet, whose bewitching melody, as a separate Motive of greeting Love (**73.**) accompanies

**73.** 

with sweet ardour Brünnhilde's following supersensual declaration of Love. With mighty exulting tones the enchantingly passionate Motive of Love's Rapture (**74.**) sounds

**74.** 


after the duet, and the powerful Siegfried-Motive then relieves the *Greeting Motive with gentler motion.*

Compassion with Siegfried's unhappy parents was the origin of her pure, holy love for the son, and thus Brünnhilde's touching air ends with the reception of the death-song (**50.** b. c.) and her justification-melody (**55.** b.). In Siegfried's answer the excited figure of Love's confusion (**69.** b.) soon breaks forth and grows into *f.*, when the impetuous youth ardently implores her! »*birg meinen Muth mir nicht mehr!*« (»Unfix my manhood from might of thy fetters«), and then longingly stops with the Motive of Renunciation »gives it to freedom again! — Therewith the third part, the struggle of Love, is introduced. Brünnhilde sees her horse (with the gaily jumbing Walküren-Motive) in the near fir-grove, and this view makes her think sadly of her former godship, which is now to be lost altogether in the fervour of man's earthly love. Again and again Siegfried's passionate wooing interrupts her meditations—all ending in the Motive of Renunciation—with the animated Motives of Love's Rapture (**74.**), Love's Delight (**69.** a) and the fluttering harmonies of the fiery blaze, which now burns in his own bosom. After the wildest assault of the theme of Love's Confusion (**69.** b) she once more opposes him gravely and solemnly with the *Walhall-motive:* »*Heilig schied ich aus Walhall!*« (»Holy went I from Walhall!«) Then his

love ominously takes *the Motive of the World's Heritage* into its service and turns it from the symbol of the highest heroism into the charming expression of sensual love's desire: »*erwache, sei mir ein Weib!*« (»A woman awaken to be!«) But above it the gloomy spectre of the *curse* rises menacingly; the music becomes dark and confused: one of the effective figures out of Fricka's scene which caused Siegmund's death, brustles down at the despairing words: »*Schrecken schreitet und bäumt sich empor!*« (»Horror hisses and hurls up its head!«) and with the melody of her justification, swelling into *ff*. Brünnhilde's sacred anxiety outdoes Siegfried's enthusiastic consolation: »*Sonnenhell leuchtet der Tag!*« (Broad is the blaze of the sun!«) by the cry: »*meiner Schmach!*« (»Of my harm!«).

The fourth part: Love's victory, begins in clearest purity with the gently moved, holy peace-breathing melody of: »*ewig war ich, ewig bin ich*« (»Always was I, always am I«). For the last time Brünnhilde tries to elevate Siegfried's love into the spheres of eternal welfare; and thus from this blissful melody of peace (**75.**), with low but ardent

**75.**




sounds she lets the sublime picture of Siegfried the guardian of the world's welfare arise. (**76.**)

**76.**



As both these melodies unite themselves: whereat the Slumber-Motive accompanies the first one, a disturbing wave of the sensual love-delight rolls between them, which together with the figure of love's confusion, passionately varied in the form of a restless up and down of playing waves, accompanies the most effective answer of Siegfried. In the touching tune of the *question to fate* the loving maid answers with a cry: »*Ob jetzt ich dein?*« (»still Brünnhild' burns?«) and gives way to the wild flood of the bewildering figure, plunging deep into the raving storm of her elementary Walküren nature. But Siegfried, not afraid of the fierce maid's demoniacal outbreak of feeling, takes up from her his own powerful motive as an irresistible victorious shout amidst the tempestuous flutter of the Walküren-ride: » *Wie des Blutes Ströme sich zünden, kehrt mir zurück mein kühner Muth!*« (»Now our hearts are hot on each other« etc.). The little bird merrily twitters upon his branch (**67.** d.+a.); Brünnhilde exultingly shouts out the Walküren-cry and the wild chromatic descent of the laughter of the Walkürs flows into the motive of rapture: »*lachend muss ich dich lieben, lachend zu Grunde gehen!*« (»laughter leads me to love thee!« And now the Melody of Love's resolution (**77.**), taking up on the way *love's*

**77.**



*greeting* (**73.**) and the *world's heritage* (**70.**), ushers in with mighty, defying steps the grandest duet of the enraptured pair, to the most significant concluding words in the motive of *Love's rapture* (**74.**): »*leuchtende Liebe, lachender Tod!*« (»Lighting love and laughing death!«)

Brünnhilde throws herself into Siegfried's arms; the theme of the world's heritage leads once more *ff.* into the same Motive of Rapture, which is accompanied by *Siegfried's Motive:* proudly rising from the depths: and at last all exult in a long, triumphant final trill.

## IV.

# GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG.

With the »Götterdämmerung« (the dusk of the Gods) begins for the drame a new, dark and gloomy day, which is announced by those mighty accords of the »greeting of the world«, but to which, instead of light harp sounds, the dark harmonies of the Nornes attach themselves, sounding throughout the whole of the first scene—the scene of the Nornes. The two groups of the three rather lengthy songs of the weaving sisters of fate each close with the death-song (**50.** b) to the refrain: „*weist du, wie das wird?*“ („deem'st thou, why it's done?“) and the third time with its simple original form, the question to fate. In the third song of the first group the vigorously rising theme of the god's power signifies the preparation for the conflagration of the world. The third of the principal parts of this scene consists of swiftly alternating songs, which confusedly enhance themselves and are governed by the restless Motive of the Ring, against whose curse the power of the Nornes is ineffective. With a strong musical effect the rope breaks. They sink into the ground with the *curse*, and the harmonies of twillight vanish after them into the depth with a last low echo of the question to fate. An interludium of the orchestra depicts the change of dawn into day. The two motives appear, which in the following are divided between Siegfried and Brünnhilde: the *heroic theme of Siegfried*, out of the call of the forest son (**54.** b) and the new Motive of Brünnhilde (**78.**)

78. 


The impetuous son of the forest became a knightly hero; and from out the being of the hitherto chaste godly maid speak now devout womanhood. The altered, humanized character of her love is therefore expressed in the third of the chief motives of the scene. This Motive of heroic love (79.) is a brilliantly harmonized and clarified varia-

79. 


tion of the Motive of Love's Confusion (69. b). At the conclusion of the scene, and especially as accompaniment to the magnificent, vigorous duet of the parting lovers, the Motive of the Pleasures of Travel is added, to the fresh tones of which Siegfried departs, accompanied by Brünnhilde's greetings in her motive, dying away out of *ff*.

The now following symphony set leads us with Siegfried up the Rhine to the court of the Gibichungen. The horn-flourish of the forest son mingles charmingly with the skipping play of Loge's Motive. Thus we get through the fiery blaze to the Rhine, whose waves now restlessly float along with the broad undulating harmonies of the primeval element. Soon after we hear the nymphs' well-known songs of the Rhinegold (6.) the Ring and of Renunciation; at last the Rhinegold-fanfare dies away, announcing the owner of the ring. The ruler's call of the Nibelung answers, and with the preparative onset of a new variable motive begins the first act at the court of the Gibichungen. I should briefly call it, in reference to this onset, which frequently is used separately like an abrupt deadly stroke, (†) the Motive of Hagen (80.). At first it appears in company with the splendid chivalrous Motive of the Gibichungen (68.) exquisitely expressing the quiet delight

**80.**



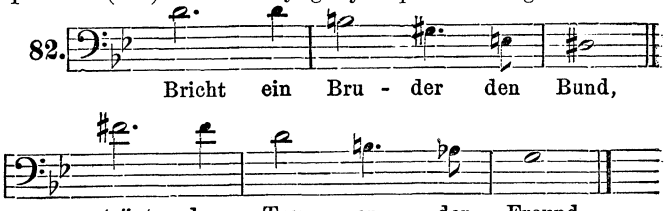

in safe possession (**81.** a). In the course of the conversation it becomes the flattering figure of the love-snare which Hagen lays for Siegfried (**81.** b). But the Nibelung cannot do without magic tricks: the spell of the tarncap now appears as Motive of the Magic Deceit (**81.**). Siegfried's greeting in his own haughty motive Gunter had

**81.**



answered with a further variation of Hagen's Motive, the *theme of friendship* (**80**. c.). Deeply touching is the moment when Siegfried in sweet remembrance of Brünnhilde empties the drinking horn with the motives of Love's greeting and of the world's heritage and when now a long trill under the harmonies of the magic deceit leads over to *Gutrune's greeting and love-motive*, which in its clear and lovely figures shows the same foundation as that of Hagen.

Loge's Motive, which the swift hero with a merry ornamental conclusion assumes as expression of his own deceitful delight in adventures, quickly comes to an end. The musical culmination of the scene is the duet of the oath of brotherhood, whose principal theme imitates the Motive of Renunciation. Not gain, only loss is to be obtained through this brotherhood; this signifies the Motive of the Curse which introduces and concludes the oath. In this duet we meet besides that of the joys of travel a grandly descending figure („breaks a brother the bond", etc.), which in the Walküre already has characterized Hunding's cold sense of justice towards guest and outrager, and which further on Hagen assumes as a Motive of Right of Expiation (**82**.) Then they gaily depart in Siegfried's boat




with the exulting Motive of Loge; „Hagen's watch" begins, agitated by the syncopes of the work of destruction and chiefly accompanied by Alberich's triumphant call. On the summit of this magnificent song of infernal triumph proudly rises the demoniacal blessing of the Nibelung.

In the orchestral description of Siegfried's return to Brünnhilde the echoes of Hagen's watch are relieved by the Motive of Brünnhilde, between which at the beginning and at the end that of the ring is heard. Out of a long

trill the recollection of *Siegfried, the guardian of the world*, arises in incomparable beauty and gentleness: Brünnhilde is wrapt in loving contemptation of the ring, when she is roused by the approaching and growing storms of the Walküren tunes; her sister Waltraute rushes up to her with an agitated, energetic figure out of the death-song. Both parts of her great narration are introduced by Wotan's Motive of Wrath. The first one contains a splendid picture of the last assembly of the gods. With the accords of the Walhall-march the proud passage of the godly power once more rises and then descends in several repetitions of the world's destruction, closely following each other. Her lay becomes dark and low: „Holda's apples" are cited in vain; gloomy the Walhalla theme dies away, the Rhinegold (7.) swoly arises in Wotan's resigned mind. The second part tells what Waltraute has heard in listening to Wotan's sighs: the parting-song the ring the curse. The Motive of Wrath in quick repetitions takes up the leaping tone out of the *revengeful fancy* and in this new shape the motive now ominously clings to Brünnhilde. Awful resounds her deciding answer: „*die Liebe liesse ich nie!*" (from love I go not with life) in the renouncing melody of Love's curse. The Walkürish rushing and roaring at Waltraute's departure passes over into the flickering of blazing flame, into which a near horn shouts the motive of Siegfried. Siegfried, in the shape of Gunther, jumps out of the fire with the Motive of the Tarncap, which immediately glides into the form of the magic deceit with the Gibichungen motive as heroic appendix. The heavy, oppressive atmosphere of the foregoing scene discharges itself in the wild struggle between Siegfried and Brünnhilde in which the Motives of the Ring, the Curse, the Walküren, the Bondage and the murderous stroke of Hagen's Motive rage through one another. Brünnhilde's strength is broken: the theme of the world's guardian and Brünnhilde's Motive die away, mournfully sighing in the dusk of the Motive of Magic Deceit; with the quivering syncopes of the work of destruction she staggers into her chamber. Mighty octave-strokes resound, when Siegfried draws the chastely sepe-

rating sword and in the serious notes of the bond of brotherhood swears his fidelity to it. After a painful *ff.* outcry of Brünnhilde's motive the act ends with the ascending Motive of he Tarncap in *fff.*

Dreadful, dismal night spreads mistlike over the whole first scene of the second act in darkly quivering syncopes. The ghostlike Alberich provokes the half-waking Hagen to his rash deed. Of course hereby the Motive of the Ring plays chief part. But the direct incitment to the rape and murder assumes a new, fearfully expressive Motive of the Murder (83.). With the Nibelung's bless-

83.



ing Alberich's exhortations come to an end; his curse sounds after him as he vanishes and the ruler's call, which had appeared already several times, dies away as Motive of Bondage with his last: »Be faithful!« — We now witness the second sunrise; a new *cres.* rising tune is soon wrought out into a diabolical tri-tonous series, which further on becomes of some significance as Motive of Hagen's gaiety (84.), and which at last flows over into

84.




the harmonies of the Nibelung's blessing and of the tarncap's spell.

At this moment Siegfried with his well-known call returns. His merry narration of the successful adventure is throughout accompanied by Loge's Motive with the gay appendix and partly under the significant influence of the very frequently returning harmonies of the tarncap. The wedding call (84.) — resulting from Gutrune's greeting

85.



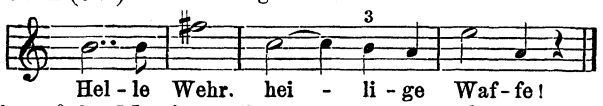
(**80.** d.) with — whose tender sounds she enters the scene to welcome Siegfried by a most lovely melody, also forms the conclusion of the same melody at the end.

The harmless gaiety of scene, which so happily contrasts with the gloomy background of the first one, becomes demoniacal by the hellish humour of Hagen in the following scene with the vassals. Hagen's summons are kept monotonous or in the two notes of the motive of bondage and accompanied unceasingly by hammering sextoles on the tone C of his bull's horn, whilst in the bass resounds the figure of his gaiety. At the words: „*Noth — Noth ist da!*“ („Need! Need is now!“) this noisy roaring rushes into the wild descent of the Motive of the „Götterdämmerung“. This the vassals take up with question: „*Welche Noth ist da?*“ („Which need is there?“ Comp. **49.**). As for the rest, their confused, impatient questioning and their wild eagerness for combat is characterized by an excited, vigorous figure much like the accompaniment to Siegfried's forging-song, which besides is joined by the loudly hammering rhythm of the giants and of the Nibelungs. All this vivacity is only heightened by Hagen's lofly tranquillity, and at last all break out in loud laughter. The mighty song of the vassals: »*Gross Glück und Heil lacht nun dem Rhein*« (»long luck and health meets now the Rhine«) is again carried on by Hagen's gaiety and the wedding-call. There upon ceases this excitement and a new lively, pompous symphonic set begins: the entrance march for Gunther and Brünnhilde, simply and most effectively formed out of the Motive of the Gibichungs.

But now all mirth is come to an end. Brünnhilde's first look upon Siegfried unfetters the Motive of the revengeful Fancy, which henceforth predominates. She perceives the ring on Siegfried's finger: and close upon its motive, striking down *ff.*, follows the curse, that opens the following great scene. The anxious, hasty enquiries of her hardly mastered excitement, are quivering with the syncopes of the destruction. Siegfried, meaning no harm, answers whilst the Motive of the Ring changes for him into the soft songs of the Rhine-daughters. Out of the wild storm strug-

gless Brünnhilde's grand prayer in the long extended Walhall-theme: „*Heilige Götter, himmlische Rather!*“ (Gods of my heaven, holy beholders!) And now she continues with an incomparably touching combination of her melody of justification with the Motive of Flight: „*lehrt ihr mich Leiden, wie keiner sie litt u. s. w.*“ („Named you sorrow unsuffered till now?“). The burning passion here grows to an immense height, from which finally the Motive of Renunciation at the word: „*er zwang mir Lust und Liebe ab*“ (He forced delight from me, and love“), in keen painful irony ornamented by trills and voleés sinks down again. Sad irony speaks likewise out of the repetition of the motive of heroic love, with which Brünnhilde answers to Siegfried's justification, after having most expressively used the Motive of revengeful Fancy at the words: „*du listiger Held, sieh, wie du lügst*“ („Behold how thy lips heartely lie“). Again the general excitement, into which the vassals and the women are drawn, commences when the trumpets sharply peal forth the Motive of the Right of Atonement; thus the scene rises to its second culmination: the oaths of Siegfried and Brünnhilde, awfully accompanied by the Revengeful Fancy. Upon the new Motive of the Oath (86.) —reminding us of the curse—follows the

**86.**




Motive of the Murder at the sharp words: „*wo Scharfes mich schneidet*“ — „*deine Schärfe segne ich*“ *etc.* („where a blade can bleed me“ — „thy keenness I bless“). The raging storm at Brünnhilde's oath sounds in passionate fierceness mightily on till the frightened vassals cry out: „*hilf Donner, tose dein Wetter zu schweigen die wüthende Schmach!*“ („Help, Donner, Dewn with thy thunder, to deaden the shout of this shame!“). Then Siegfried leads the terrified people back to his own exulting gaiety which expresses itself wantonly in the merry wedding-call. His frolicsome exit with Gutrune and the people accompanies that new vividly repeated phrase of love's delight. The *wedding-call* sounds after them but it dies away in the *curse* and in the *renunciation*, with which begins the second part of the scene.

The *question to fate* now seriously warns us of the approaching end, whilst Brünnhilde after a long pause puts with the motive of the *vindictive fancy* her ponderous question to fate; „*welches Unhold's List liegt hier verschollen?*“ („Was the hand of hell hidden behind it?“). And then the further inquiries, with a combination of the Motives of the vindictive Fancy and of Bondage which goes through the whole scene and which may be called the Motive of the vindictive League (87.), whose sword is to carry




out her revenge. Hagen offers to do the deed with the Motives of the *Sword* and of *Murder*, which last one is now frequently heard.

With the trembling syncopes of the *destruction* Brünnhilde betrays to him the vulnerable place between Siegfried's shoulders. Hagen's words: »There my spear shall hit him«, are confirmed by the Motive of the vindictive League, as well as the following ones addressed to Gunther: »*Siegfried's Tod — nur der sühnt deine Schmach!*« (»Siegfried's death — it alone slays thy shame«). His final resolution is still kept in suspense by the *bond of brotherhood* and the thought of Gutrune in her *love melody* and the *wedding-call*, till Brünnhilde's jealousy wildly breaks forth in the same love melody and quickly carries everything to the end: to the grand concluding trio of the murderous oath. It is introduced by the *Motive of the vindictive League*. The words »so shall it be« are accompanied by the *Motive of Bondage*. Then follows the *Motive of the Right of Expiation*. »*Sühn' er die Schmach*« (»Let him atone for the shame«). At the words »*mit seinem Blut büss' er die Schuld*« and »*Allrauner, rächender Gott, schwerwissender Eideshort*« (»the broken bond heal with his blood!« — »Allrauner! Wreaker for wrong! Oath-viewer and aid of vows!«) the most serious concluding figure

of the *bond of brotherhood*, corresponding to the phrase of ban, is repeated and at the last mentioned ones the heavy notes of the right of expiation. The *Motive of the Oath* forms the conclusion (*Wotan wende dich her* — „Wotan, turn hither"), after which the Walhall-theme grandly rises, and finds its awfully piercing conclusion in the *Motive of Murder*. But immediately afterwards the clear wedding-call joins in, together with the entrance of the gay festival train, surrounded by the ornamented Loge's figure, growing with the merry flourish of trumpets and Nornes (on the stage) to the utmost degree of splendour and joy. But in the height of exultation the conjured power of vengeance lifts up at last its murderous arm in the wild hastening *Motive of the vindictive League*, roaring in hellish *fff*.

The last act commences in unexpected gaiety with the charming and significant scene between Siegfried, having lost his hunting companions, and the three Water-fairies in the woodland-valley of the Rhine. From all parts of the forest grounds the merry hunting-flourish, (consisting of Siegfried's „son-of-the-wood's-call", Gunther's wedding-call and Hagen's bull's horn-call) and then begins the billow-play and the Rhinegold-melodies sound at the commencement of the whole drama, soon enlarged by new figures, wonderfully waving and rushing up and down, as accompaniment to the charming songs of the three Rhine-daughters. We may call these two new motives the Shout of the Fairies (88.) and the Figure of the Fairies' Mockery. (89.)

**88.**




The lovely chat of the girls, trying to get the ring back from him, assumes after the first refusal of Siegfried the most serious character in the time of the ring and the renunciation. They sing: „*Wahr' ihn wohl, bis du das Unheil*

89. 

*erräthst*“ — „*froh fühlst Du Dich, befreien wir Dich von dem Fluch*“ („Withold it, hero, and ward it well, until thou hast read the hurt thou harbour'st in the ring. Glad feel if we come to free thee then of its curse!“) and in the notes of the curse itself: (*in fernster Zeit zu zeugen den Tod*, „that hastens to death“, etc.). The *Motive of Götterdämmerung*, accompanies this as well as the following: (*Weiche dem Fluch*, „fly the curse“), after which the gloomy figure of the Nornes spins its monotonous time around the words: „*Ihm flochten nächtlich webende Nornen in des Urgesetzes Seil*“ („At night by working Nornes it was woven in the endless coil of counsel of old“). But the fearless hero Siegfried does not dread the dangers of life — that is expressed by the bass-trumpets in a scornfully, rising motive. He shows this scorn by an ancient use, throwing over his head a clod with the quickly downrushing *Motive of the Ring*.

With a passionate and excited melody embracing Brünnhilde's Motive, the fairies swim away. By and by their shouting dies away under soft harp-sounds, in which Siegfried's voice joins.

With low waning sounds rises the curse, and with the harsh *Motive of Bondage* resounds Hagen's „Hoiho!“ The atmosphere of murder spreads itself over the clear and happy scene. Moreover the former merrines seems to keep on for the present: from out the call of the son of the woods a lively, spirited musical picture of the approaching hunting-train develops itself. A merry hunting-train forms itself of Hagen's and the Gibichungen's Motive. Once more the whole drama is recalled to us by

the different motives of Siegfried's song: so we hear the *Forging-Motive*, *parts of Mime's education Song*, *ihe flourish of the Sword's guardian*, *the phrase of Nothung*, *the Motives of Meditation and of the Dragon*, *the „Waldweben“* accompanied by *Sieglinde's Wälsung-Motive*, and in rich and richer chords the *melodies of the bird;* and as at last the dark hormonies of the *Cooking-Motive* remind the hero of Mime's falsehood, Hagen sneeringly laughs out with the *Forging-Motive*, as once Alberich did. Out to the second part, Hagen mixes for the hero his mischievous potion *„dass Fernes ihm nicht entfalle“* („that the remote may not escape him“), with the flattering melody of Gutrune's love motive. Again the *tarncap's spell* changes into the *magic deceit*, but out of its dusk the Motive of *Heroic Love* very softly and tenderly comes to light and flows into the long missed *motive of Brünnhilde.* Siegfried, lost in his remembrances, recalls the *air of the bird* on the Walküres-stone: the *fiery blaze* flares up with the *slumber-Motive* echoing round it; Freia's sweet, melodious phrase lifts up the last veil from the mind of the singer. Again in his fancy he awakes the sleeping maid with the proudly rising *theme of the world's bondage*, and as her arm once did, the charming figure of the *greeting of the world* embraces him, (**72.** c.) There with mighty chromatic gusts in *ff.*, Wotan's ravens flutter above his head; into the thunder of the *curse* flashes the lightning of the *Motive of Bondage:* Hagen's spear has hit him. Once more the *Siegfried-Motive* half arises; but there the hero breaks down upon his shield with a hasty rush of sextoles, with vanishings into breathless, hesitating pair of syncopes (on the wind instruments), followed by the figure of the string-instruments which gloomily echoes after like the last groan of a dying man. As this awful voice of death repeats itself *diminuendo*, Gunther and the vassals in broken toner utter their frightened: *„Hagen, was thust du?“* („Hagen, what mean st thou?“) But he turns away with the stubborn Motive of the *Right of Expiation: „Meineid rächt' ich“* („His oath is on him!“). The syncopes *p.* sounds after him, interrupted in pauses by the *question to fate.*

The horrors of destruction are surpassed by the di-

vine beauty of Siegfried's *farewell to life*, in which the *greeting of the world* with its splendid chords and light harp sounds return. Then in the proud Siegfried Motive sound the words; *der Wecker kam, er küsst' dich wach*, „the wakener came; with kiss he calls", whose power and splendour melt in the melodies of the *greeting of love* and *of delight* (**73. 74.**) in the *pp.* of the question to fate. *(Brünnhilde bietet mir Gruss.)*

It follows the *funeral marche.* The *figure of death* which sets in *ff.*, is softened *dim.* and its repetitions are again and again interrupted, at last thorougly overpowered and drawn into the general triumph by the separately wrought-out *Motive of the Walsungs*, which, all fixed into the solemn rythms of the dead-march pass before our ears as the most noble solemnity in honour of the last offspring of this tragical, divine family: Siegmund's heroic theme, the Walsung-Motive, the *phrase of recognition*, the figure of *Sieglinde's compassion, the love-melody*, the *sword-flourish.* This is the culmination; then comes low and wonderfully, but soon again clear and happy the Siegfried Motive and at last in most radiant brilliancy his heroic theme: this is the »Eroica« of the most glorious hero of the world.

The *Motive of Brünnhilde* leads at last to the final scene: Night, before the Gibichungen-Hall. The triumphant call of Alberich joins with the evil forebodings of Gutrune, awaiting the return of the hunters. Frightfully Hagen's waking-call of the *Motive of Bondage* sounds into this gloomy awe; and now, after he has brought the disastrous message into the clear, cold *Motive of the Right of Expiation*, which ends with the melody of renunciation, the scene, in quick development, proceeds to the mighty end, announcing the destruction of all. Hagen demands the ring, as heir of the Albs, with the *Motive of the Curse*, kills Gunther with the *triumphant call* growing into *fff.*, and when he wants to force the ring from Siegfried's finger, the dead hero lifts up his arm menacingly with the sword-flourish and in this moment Brünnhilde enters with the *pp.* rising and falling *motives of Götterdämmerung and of the Nornes.* Wortier-lamentations she brings the hero with the solemn death-song.

She turns away Gutrune from his corpse by changing the last one's *greeting Motive* into the sublime theme of the world's heritage. The poor, bereaved wife sinks down with her dying away love melody. The question to fate, which frequently and significantly is repeated, ushers in Brünnhilde's last, great song. First she orders the pyre to be built up, whereat the figure of the conflagration of the universe rises mightily and the fluttering sounds of the fiery blaze begin their lively motion. „*Denn der Helden heiligste Ehre zu theilen, verlangt mein eigener Leib*“ („for amidst his holiest meed to be with him I long in every limb“). Then she begins her wonderful song of reminiscence, kept in the soft Motive of *Love's-Greeting* and precipitately concluding with the powerful octave-strokes of Nothung at the words „*trog keiner wie er*“ („has lied never his like!“) With the solemn question to fate ends the death-song; then she turns to the gods, accompanied by the sublime Walhall-cords and with the melody of justification (**55.** b.). *The curse*, the Rhinegold, *the goodly trouble* and Walhall join marvellously in the parting call „*Ruhe, ruhe du Gott*“ („slumber, slumber, thou God.“) She takes the ring amidst the soft harmonies of *Götterdämmerung*. In lovely sweetness resound all the Rhinegold and Rhine-daughter melodies Loge's chromatic Motive flares up, when she takes up the torch with the *Motive of the Treaty*. The raven flies up and after the grand re-entrance of the *Motives of Götterdämmerung*, *of the Ring*, and *of Walhall*, the blaze flashes up in restless streams of flames to the end. — Grane appears with the stormy gusts of the Walküren-ride; and with the Walküren-call Brünnhilde exults in her old wild boldness. But it drives the lovely woman to

**90.**



another death: to the expiating death of love. And thus the melody of **Salvation of love (90.)** breathes through Brünnhilde's last words and through the waving of the orchestral sounds, like the first breath of eternal freedom. With the Walkuren-call she gallops on horseback into the flaring pyre, and the blaze at once flashes up rapidly *fff.* with wild bustle over the united lovers.

Hagen throws himself into the swelling waves after the ring: these the curse suddenly breaks off never more to return. The Rhine-daughters come swimming with their first song (**2.**) which joins the *Motive of Salvation.* In the far polar-light we see the grand tragic picture of the last assembly of the gods. The whole wonderful structure of the Nibelungen music borne by the pillars of the Walhall-theme dissolves into the *Motive of the godly Power*, accompanied by the gigantic paces of the up and down swelling and at last into *fff.* growing figure of **persecution.** For the last time we hear Siegfried's Motive, but the wild rush of the Götterdämmerung-Motive overpowers it with the utmost force: flames cover the picture of the old gods and the melody of **salvation through love** waves *dim.* under ethereal harp sounds, as the freed and blessed spirit of love of the whole world's tragedy ascends to the eternal regions of his heavenly home!

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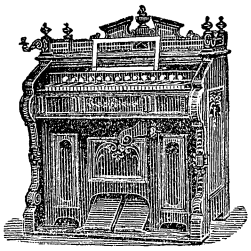
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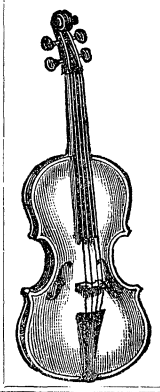
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